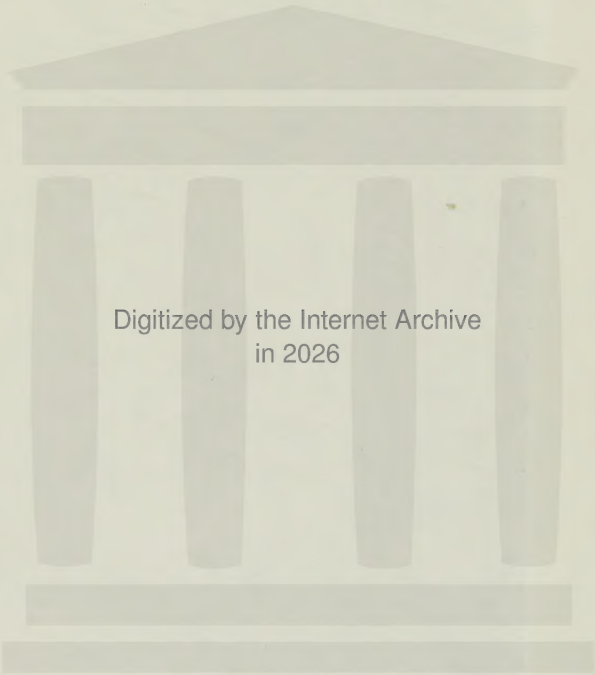
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LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

XXI

ESSAYS, LETTERS, AND MISCELLANIES

VOLUME I

THE NOVELS AND OTHER WORKS OF

LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

ESSAYS, LETTERS MISCELLANIES

VOLUME I

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INTRODUCTION

CONTROVERSIAL articles, essays on timely topics,— arbitration, liquor drinking, vegetarianism, non-resistance, disarmament, — prefaces, private and public letters, magnanimous defense of the persecuted Dukhobors or spirit wrestlers, and reports on the famine-stricken districts of Russia make up the bulk of the present volume, which will be found to contain some of the author's most vigorous and most characteristic utterances.

The famine articles, relating the measures instituted to assist the depressed and demoralized peasantry, and picturing the terrible conditions under which no small part of the population of Russia is degenerating, are intensely interesting. There are details which are like extracts from a novelist's note-book. Count Tolstoï lays his finger on the deep, underlying causes of the famine: it is not crop failures; it is not a material, but a moral, famine. The differences between these papers published in the Russian edition and those that have found their way into print in Switzerland or elsewhere throw a curious light on the operations of the censorship. It is evident that the government fears the light of truth, and resents any criticism on its methods of dealing with its internal affairs. Yet no unprejudiced person can fail to accept Count Tolstoï's theory that the paternalism which makes a child of the peasant, subjecting him to the whims of all sorts of function-

aries, destroying his self-respect by flogging and his dignity by a State religion which does not appeal to his conscience, is bringing ruin upon Russia. The peasantry is the very bone and sinew of a country, and when agriculture fails, the country is doomed. Count Tolstoï advocates greater freedom of education, of religion, of movement, and he predicts that prosperity would soon return, and the chronic state of famine now obtaining and growing worse year after year would correct itself, if the terrible exactions of government would cease.

He returns again and again to his plea for Christians to unite on the five simple commands of Christ and put them into practice. The "Three Parables" and the "Letter to N. N." contain a rather unusual and pathetic personal note which cannot help touching the heart, bringing out so evidently the man's generous sincerity and simplicity.

His application of the rule of non-resistance to the tremendous international questions which are keeping Europe, and, indeed, the whole world, in the condition of a vast mine of dynamite, ready at any instant to explode with unimaginable consequences, is perhaps his most important contribution to the practical solution of the difficulty which confronts humanity at the present time. Occasionally a single man, or even a whole body of men, like the Dukhobors, who have been transported *en masse* to the Canadian wilderness, refuse to bear arms from conscientious motives. Count Tolstoï sees that the simplest and easiest method of disposing of the question of excessive armament of the nations is for all men to follow their example. War would then cease from sheer inertia. If every man in Russia refused to

enter the army, the army would cease, and the millions of armed men which are now devouring like caterpillars would return to their peaceful vocations and bring prosperity to the tormented land.

His plea against the use of intoxicants is as chivalrous and convincing as anything that he has ever written. Possibly the believer in a moderate use of light wines will charge him with fanatic extravagance, but no one can doubt his zeal or his genuineness of conviction.

Taking the volume as a whole, though not free from a certain necessary fragmentariness, its consistency and its vitality — its inherent power to interest — will be found no less marked than previous volumes, though they be more coherent. It represents the present activity of the count, who, having passed his seventy-first birthday, still takes an intelligent and lively interest in whatever affects the welfare of humanity; like a prophet he sends forth his clarion voice against the oppressions of power and the dangerous teaching of a pseudo-Christianity. In this respect the volume excels in interest all the others, just as a man's personality must be superior to what he produces. It is a sort of epitome of the life of a man who towers head and shoulders above the great men of his own country, and either now does, or is destined to, wield a greater influence than any other man of the century.

The translations in the present volume are due to several hands, but a large number of them have been made by Mr. Aylmer Maude of England, who is a personal friend of Count Tolstoï, and in immediate touch with his industrial, religious, and social activities. Many of the articles thus furnished have been from sources otherwise unattainable.

PATRIOTISM AND CHRISTIANITY[1]

THE Franco-Russian festivities which took place in October, 1894, in France made me, and others, no doubt, as well, first amused, then astonished, then indignant — feelings which I wished to express in a short article.

But while studying further the chief causes of this strange phenomenon, I arrived at the reflections which I here offer to the reader.

I

THE Russian and French peoples have been living for many centuries with a knowledge of each other — entering sometimes into friendly, more often, unfortunately, into very unfriendly, relations at the instigation of their respective governments — when suddenly, because two years ago a French squadron came to Kronstadt, and its officers, having landed, eaten much, and drunk a

[1] In this remarkable work by Count Tolstoï, which powerfully aroused European attention, the principle of "non-resistance," which is so often, by opponents, made to take a *doctrinaire*, or even absurd complexion, is seen in drastic application to the huge militarism under which the world groans. As reasonable people, following Tolstoï, we must ask: "What other principle of conduct than this can possibly remove the incubus?"

To those living outside of Europe, the unusual contentions of this work may not seem so startling as to those who live under a system of compulsory military service. But a little thought reminds us that we also maintain hundreds of thousands of fighting men, and that in paying taxes for government purposes, we are responsible for the appearance, upon the sea and in the field, of those whom Tolstoï might call "licensed murderers." So that the obligation of conscience raised by this book is equally binding upon all, whether Russian or English, French or American. — TR.

variety of wine in various places, heard and made many false and foolish speeches; and because last year a Russian squadron arrived at Toulon, and its officers, having gone to Paris and there eaten and drunk copiously, heard and made a still greater number of silly and untruthful speeches, — it came to pass that not only those who ate, drank, and spoke, but every one who was present, and even those who merely heard or read in the papers of these proceedings — all these millions of French and Russians — imagined suddenly that in some especial fashion they were enamored of each other; that is, that all the French love all the Russians, and all the Russians all the French.

These sentiments were expressed in France last October in the most unheard-of ways.

The following description of these proceedings appeared in the *Village Review*, a paper which collects its information from the daily press: —

"When the French and Russian squadrons met they greeted each other with salvos of artillery, and with ardent and enthusiastic cries of 'Hurrah!' 'Long live Russia!' 'Long live France!'

"To all this uproar the naval bands (there were orchestras also on most of the hired steamboats) contributed, the Russian playing 'God save the Tsar,' and the French the 'Marseillaise,' the public upon the steamboats waving their hats, flags, handkerchiefs, and nosegays. Many barges were loaded entirely with men and women of the working-class with their children, waving nosegays and shouting 'Long live Russia!' with all their might. Our sailors, in view of such national enthusiasm, could not restrain their tears.

"In the harbor all the French men-of-war present were ranged in two divisions, and our fleet passed between them, the admiral's vessel leading. A splendid moment was approaching.

"A salute of fifteen guns was fired from the Russian flagship in honor of the French fleet, and the French flagship replied with thirty. The Russian National Hymn pealed from the French lines; French sailors

mounted their masts and rigging; vociferations of welcome poured uninterruptedly from both fleets, and from the surrounding vessels. The sailors waved their caps, the spectators their hats and handkerchiefs, in honor of the beloved guests. From all sides, sea and shore, thundered the universal shout, 'Long live Russia!' 'Long live France!'

"According to the custom in naval visits, Admiral Avellan and the officers of his staff came on shore in order to pay their respects to the local authorities.

"At the landing-stage they were met by the French naval staff and the senior officials of the port of Toulon.

"Friendly greetings followed, accompanied by the thunder of artillery and the pealing of bells. The naval band played the Russian National Hymn, 'God save the Tsar,' which was received with a roar from the spectators of 'Long live the Tsar!' 'Long live Russia!'

"The shouting swelled into one mighty din, which drowned the music and even the cannonade. Those present declare that the enthusiasm of the huge crowd of people attained at that moment its utmost height, and that it would be impossible to express in words the feelings which overflowed the hearts of all upon the scene.

"Admiral Avellan, with uncovered head, and accompanied by the French and Russian officers, then drove to the naval administration buildings, where he was received by the French Minister of Marine.

"In welcoming the admiral, the minister said, 'Kronstadt and Toulon have severally witnessed the sympathy which exists between the French and the Russian peoples. Everywhere you will be received as the most welcome of friends.

"'Our government and all France greet you and your comrades on your arrival as the representatives of a great and honorable nation.'

"The admiral replied that he was unable to find language to express his feelings. 'The Russian fleet, and all Russia,' he said, 'will be grateful to you for this reception.'

"After some further speeches, the admiral again, in taking leave of the minister, thanked him for his reception, and added, 'I cannot leave you without pronouncing the words which are written in the hearts of every Russian: 'Long live France!'"[1]

Such was the reception at Toulon. In Paris the welcome and the festivities were still more extraordinary.

The following is a description, taken from the papers, of the reception in Paris:—

"All eyes are directed toward the Boulevard des Italiens, whence the Russian sailors are expected to emerge. At length, far away, the roar of a whole hurricane of shouts and cheers is heard. The roar grows louder, more distinct. The hurricane is evidently approaching. The crowd surges in the Place. The police press forward to clear the route to the Cercle Militaire, but the task is not easy. Among the spectators the pushing and scrambling baffles description. .... At last the head of the cortège appears in the Place. At once arises a deafening shout of 'Vive la Russie! Vivent les Russes!'

"All heads are uncovered; spectators fill the windows and balconies, they even cover the housetops, waving handkerchiefs, flags, hats, cheering enthusiastically, and flinging clouds of tricolor cockades from the upper windows. A sea of handkerchiefs, hats, and flags waves over the heads of the crowd below; a hundred thousand voices shout frantically, 'Vive la Russie! Vivent les Russes;' the throng make wild efforts to catch a glimpse of the dear guests, and try in every possible way to express their enthusiasm."

Another correspondent writes that the rapture of the crowd was like a delirium. A Russian journalist who was in Paris at the time thus describes the entry of the Russian marines:—

"It may truthfully be said that this event is of universal importance, astounding, sufficiently touching to produce tears, an elevating influence on the soul, making it throb with *that love which sees in men brothers,*

[1] *Siel'sky Vyestnik*, 1893, No. 41.

which hates blood, and violence, and the snatching of children from a beloved mother. I have been in a kind of torpor for the last few hours. It seemed almost overpoweringly strange to stand in the terminus of the Lyons Railway, amid the representatives of the French government, in their uniforms embroidered with gold, amongst the municipal authorities in full dress, and to hear cries of 'Vive la Russie!' 'Vive le Tsar!' and our national anthem played again and again.

"Where am I? I reflected. What has happened? What magic current has united all these feelings, these aspirations, into one stream? Is not this the sensible presence of the God of love and of fraternity, the presence of the loftiest ideal descending in His supremest moments upon man?

"My soul is so full of something beautiful, pure, and elevated that my pen is unable to express it. Words are weak in comparison with what I saw and felt. It was not rapture, the word is too commonplace; it was better than rapture. More picturesque, deeper, happier, more various. It is impossible to describe what took place at the Cercle Militaire when Admiral Avellan appeared on the balcony of the second story. Words here are of no avail. During the 'Te Deum,' while the choir in the church was singing, 'O Lord, save Thy people,' through the open door were blown the triumphal strains of the 'Marseillaise,' played by the brass bands in the street.

"It produced an astounding, an inexpressible impression."[1]

II

On arriving in France the Russian sailors passed, during a fortnight, from one festivity to another, and during or after each they ate, drank, and made speeches. Information as to where and what they ate and drank on Wednesday, and where and what on Friday, and what they said on these occasions, was purveyed by telegraph to the whole of Russia.

[1] *Novoye Vremya* (New Time), Oct. 1893.

The moment one of the Russian commanders had drunk to the health of France, it became known to the whole world; and the instant the Russian admiral had said, "I drink to beautiful France," his effusion was transmitted round the globe. Moreover, for such was the solicitude of the papers that they commemorated not merely the toasts, but the dishes, not even omitting the hors-d'œuvres, or *zakouskas*, which were consumed.

For instance, the following menu was published, with the comment that the dinner it represented was a work of art: —

Consommé de volailles; petits pâtés.
Mousse de homard parisienne.
Noisette de bœuf à la béarnaise.
Faisans à la Périgueux.
Casseroles de truffes au champagne.
Chaudfroid de volailles à la Toulouse.
Salade russe.
Croûte de fruits toulonnaise.
Parfaits à l'ananas.
Dessert.

In a second number it said: "From a culinary standpoint nothing better could have been desired. The menu was the following: —

Potage livonien et Saint-Germaïn.
Zéphyrs Nontua.
Esturgeon braisé moldave.
Selle de daguet grand veneur. ... etc.

And a following issue gave still another menu. With each was a minute description of the wines which the feasters imbibed — such vodka, such old Burgundy, Grand Moët, etc.

In an English journal a list of all the intoxicating liquor drunk during the festivities was given. The quantity mentioned was so enormous that one hardly believes it would have been possible that all the drunkards in France and Russia could account for so much in so short a time.

The speeches made were also published, but the menus were more varied than the speeches. The latter, without exception, always consisted of the same

words in different combinations. The meaning of these words was always the same — We love each other tenderly, and are enraptured to be so tenderly in love. Our aim is not war, not a *revanche*, not the recovery of the lost provinces; our aim is only *peace*, the furtherance of *peace*, the security of *peace*, the tranquillity and *peace* of Europe.

Long live the Russian emperor and empress! We love them, and we love *peace*. Long live the President of the Republic and his wife! We love them and we love *peace*. Long live France, Russia, their fleets and their armies! We love the army, and *peace*, and the commander of the Russian fleet.

The speeches concluded for the most part, like some popular ditty, with a refrain, "Toulon-Kronstadt," or "Kronstadt-Toulon." And the reiteration of the names of these places, where so many different dishes had been eaten and so many kinds of wine drunk, were pronounced as words which should stimulate the representatives of either nation to the noblest deeds — as words which require no commentary, being full of deep meaning in themselves.

"We love each other; we love peace. Kronstadt-Toulon!" What more can be said, especially to the sound of glorious music, performing at one and the same time two national anthems — one glorifying the Tsar and praying for him all possible good fortune, the other cursing all tsars and promising them destruction?

Those that expressed their sentiments of love especially well on these occasions received orders and rewards. Others, either for the same reason or from the exuberance of the feelings of the givers, were presented with articles of the strangest and most unexpected kind. The French fleet presented the Tsar with a sort of golden book in which, it seems, nothing was written — or, at least, nothing of any concern; and the Russian admiral received an aluminium plow covered with flowers, and many other trifles equally astonishing.

Moreover, all these strange acts were accompanied by still stranger religious ceremonies and public services

such as one might suppose Frenchmen had long since become unaccustomed to.

Since the time of the Concordat scarcely so many prayers can have been offered as during this short period. All the French suddenly became extraordinarily religious, and carefully deposited in the rooms of the Russian mariners the very images which a short time previously they had as carefully removed from their schools as harmful tools of superstition; and they said prayers incessantly. The cardinals and bishops everywhere enjoined devotions, and themselves offered some of the strangest of prayers. Thus a bishop at Toulon, at the launch of a certain ironclad, addressed the God of Peace, letting it, however, at the same time be felt that he could communicate as readily, if the necessity arose, with the God of War.

"What its destination may be," said the bishop, alluding to the vessel, "God only knows. Will it vomit death from its dreadful maw? We do not know. But if, having to-day pleaded with the God of Peace, we may hereafter have to call upon the God of War, we may be sure that it will advance against the foe in rank with the powerful men-of-war whose crews have to-day entered into so near and fraternal union with ours. But let this contingency be forgotten, and let the present festival leave none but peaceful memories, like those of the Grand Duke Constantine,[1] who was here at the launch of the "Quirinal," and may the friendship of France and Russia constitute these two nations the guardians of peace!"

At the same time tens of thousands of telegrams flew from Russia to France and from France to Russia.

French women greeted Russian women, and Russian women tendered their thanks to the French. A troupe of Russian actors greeted the French actors; the French actors replied that they had laid deep in their hearts the greetings of their Russian colleagues.

The Russian law students of some Russian town or other expressed their rapture to the French nation. General So-and-so thanked Madame This-and-that;

[1] Constantine Nikolaevitch visited Toulon in 1857.

Madame This-and-that assured General So-and-so of the ardor of her sentiments toward the Russian nation. Russian children wrote greetings in verse to French children; and French children replied in verse and prose. The Russian Minister of Education assured the French Minister of Education of the sudden amity toward France of all the children, clerks, and scientists in his department. The members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals expressed their warm attachment toward the French. The municipality of Kazan did the same.

The canon of Arrare conveyed to the most reverend protopresbyter of the court clergy the assurance that a deep affection toward Russia, his imperial majesty the Emperor Alexander III, and all the imperial family, exists in the hearts of all the French cardinals and bishops, and that the French and Russian clergy profess almost a similar faith, and alike worship the Holy Virgin. To this the most reverend protopresbyter replied that the prayers of the French clergy for the imperial family were joyously echoed by the hearts of all the Russian people, lovingly attached to the Tsar, and that as the Russian nation also worships the Holy Virgin, France may count upon it in life and death. The same kind of messages were sent by various generals, telegraph clerks, and dealers in groceries.

Every one sent congratulations to every one else, and thanked some one for something.

The excitement was so great that some extraordinary things were done; and yet no one remarked their strangeness, but on the contrary every one approved of them, was charmed with them, and as if afraid of being left behind, made haste to accomplish something of a similar kind in order not to be outdone by the rest.

If at times protests, pronounced or even written and printed, against this madness made their appearance, proving its unreasonableness, they were either hushed up or concealed.[1]

[1] Thus I am aware of the following protest which was made by Russian students and sent to Paris, but not accepted by any of the papers: —

Not to mention the millions of working-days spent in these festivities; the widespread drunkenness of all who took part in them, involving even those in command; not to speak of the senselessness of the speeches which were made, — the most insane and ruthless deeds were committed, and no one paid them any attention.

For instance, several score of people were crushed

"An Open Letter to French Students

"A short time back a small body of Moscow law students, headed by its inspector, was bold enough to speak in the person of the university concerning the Toulon festivities.

"We, the representatives of the united students of various provinces, protest most emphatically against the pretensions of this body, and in substance against the interchange of greetings which has taken place between it and the French students. We likewise regard France with warm affection and deep respect, but we do so because we see in her a great nation which has always been in the past the introducer and announcer of the high ideals of freedom, equality, and brotherhood for all the world; and first also in the bold attempts to incorporate these high ideals into life. The better part of Russian youth has always been prepared to acclaim France as the foremost champion of a loftier future for mankind. But we do not regard such festivities as those of Kronstadt and Toulon as appropriate occasions for such greetings.

"On the contrary, these receptions represent a sad, but, we hope, a temporary condition — the treason of France to its former great historical rôle. The country which at one time invited all the world to break the chains of despotism, and offered its fraternal aid to any nation which might revolt in order to obtain its freedom, now burns incense before the Russian government, which systematically impedes the normal organic growth of a people's life, and relentlessly crushes without consideration every aspiration of Russian society toward light, freedom, and independence. The Toulon manifestations are one act of a drama in the antagonism between France and Germany created by Bismarck and Napoleon III.

"This antagonism keeps all Europe under arms, and gives the deciding vote in European affairs to Russian despotism, which has ever been the support of all that is arbitrary and absolute against freedom, and of tyrants against the tyrannized.

"A sense of pain for our country, of regret at the blindness of so great a portion of French society, these are the feelings called forth in us by these festivities.

"We are persuaded that the younger generation in France is not allured by national Chauvinism, and that, ready to struggle for that better social condition toward which humanity is advancing, it will know how to interpret present events, and what attitude to adopt toward them. We hope that our determined protest will find an echo in the hearts of the French youth.

(Signed) "The United Council of Twenty-four Federate Societies of Moscow Students."

to death, and no one found it necessary to record the fact.

One correspondent wrote that he had been informed at a ball that there was scarcely a woman in Paris who would not have been ready to forget her duties to satisfy the desire of any of the Russian sailors.

And all this passed unremarked as something quite in the order of things. There were also cases of unmistakable insanity brought about by the excitement.

Thus one woman, having put on a dress composed of the colors of the Franco-Russian flags, awaited on a bridge the arrival of the Russian sailors, and shouting "Vive la Russie," threw herself into the river, and was drowned.

In general the women on all these occasions played the leading part, and even directed the men. Besides the throwing of flowers and various little ribbons and the presenting of gifts and addresses, the French women in the streets threw themselves into the arms of the Russian sailors and kissed them.

Some women brought their children, for some reason or other, to be kissed, and when the Russian sailors had granted this request, all present were transported with joy and shed tears.

This strange excitement was so contagious that, as one correspondent relates, a Russian sailor who appeared to be in perfect health, after having witnessed these exciting scenes for a fortnight, jumped overboard in the middle of the day, and swam about, crying "Long live France." When pulled out of the water, and questioned as to his conduct, he replied that he had vowed to swim round his ship in honor of France.

Thus the unthwarted excitement grew and grew, like a ball of snow, and finally attained such dimensions that not alone those on the spot, or merely nervously predisposed persons, but strong, healthy men were affected by the general strain and were betrayed into an abnormal condition of mind.

I remember even that whilst reading distractedly a description of these festivities, I was suddenly overcome

by strong emotion, and was almost on the verge of tears, having to check with an effort this expression of my feelings.

III

A PROFESSOR of psychiatry, Sikorsky by name, not long ago described in the *Kief University Review* what he calls the psychopathic epidemic of Malevanshchina, which he studied in the district of Vasilkof. The essence of this epidemic, according to Sikorsky, was that the peasants of certain villages, under the influence of their leader, Malevanni, became convinced that the end of the world was at hand; in consequence of which they changed their mode of life, began to dispose of their property, to wear gay clothing, to eat and drink of the best, and ceased to work. The professor considered this condition abnormal. He says:

"Their remarkable good humor often attained to exaltation, a condition of gaiety lacking all external motives. They were sentimentally inclined, polite to excess, talkative, excitable, tears of happiness being readily summoned to their eyes, and disappearing without leaving a trace. They sold the necessities of life in order to buy parasols, silk handkerchiefs, and similar articles, which, however, they only wore as ornaments. They ate a great quantity of sweets. Their condition of mind was always joyous, they led a perfectly idle life, visiting one another and walking about together. .... When chided for the insanity of their conduct and their idleness, they replied invariably with the same phrase: 'If it pleases me, I will work; if it does not, why compel myself to?'"

The learned professor regards the condition of these people as a well-defined psychopathic epidemic, and in advising the government to adopt measures to prevent its extension, concludes, "Malevanshchina is the cry of a sick population, a prayer for deliverance from drunkenness, and for improved educational and sanitary conditions."

But if malevanshchina is the cry of a sick population for deliverance from inebriety and from pernicious social conditions, what a terrible clamor of a sick people, and what a petition for a rescue from the effects of wine and of a false social existence, is this new disease which appeared in Paris with such fearful suddenness, infecting the greater part of the urban population of France, and almost the entire governmental, privileged, and civilized classes of Russia?

But if we admit that danger exists in the psychical conditions of malevanshchina, and that the government did well in following the professor's advice, by confining some of the leaders of the malevanshchina in asylums and monasteries, and by banishing others into distant places; how much more dangerous must we consider this new epidemic which has appeared in Toulon and Paris, and spread thence throughout Russia and France, and how much more needful is it that society — if the government refuse to interfere — should take decisive measures to prevent the epidemic from spreading?

The analogy between the two diseases is complete. The same remarkable good humor, passing into a vague and joyous ecstasy, the same sentimental, exaggerated politeness, loquacity, emotional weeping, without reason for its commencement or cessation, the same festal mood, the same promenading and paying calls, the same wearing of gorgeous clothes and fancy for choice food, the same misty and senseless speeches, the same indolence, the same singing and music, the same direction on the part of the women, the same clownish state of *attitudes passionnées*, which Sikorsky observed, and which corresponds, as I understand it, with the various unnatural physical attitudes adopted by people during triumphal receptions, acclamations, and after-dinner speeches.

The resemblance is absolute. The difference, an enormous one for the society in which these things take place, is merely that in one case it is the madness of a few scores of poor peaceful country people who, living on their own small earnings, cannot do any violence to their neighbors, and infect others only by

personal and vocal communication of their condition; whereas in the other case it is the madness of millions of people who possess immense sums of money and means of violence, — rifles, cannon, fortresses, ironclads, melinite, dynamite, — and having, moreover, at their disposal the most effective means for communicating their insanity: the post, telegraph, telephone, the entire press, and every class of magazine, which print the infection with the utmost haste, and distribute it throughout the world.

Another difference is that the former not only remain sober, but abstain from all intoxicating drinks, while the latter are in a constant state of semi-drunkenness which they do their best to foster.

Hence for the society in which such epidemics take place, the difference between that at Kief, when, according to Sikorsky, no violence nor manslaughter was recorded, and that of Paris, where in one procession more than twenty women were crushed to death, is equivalent to that between the falling of a small piece of smoldering coal from the fireplace upon the floor, and a fire which has already obtained possession of the floors and walls of the house.

At its worst the result of the epidemic at Kief will be that the peasants of a millionth part of Russia may spend the earnings of their own labor, and be unable to meet the government taxes; but the consequences of the Paris-Toulon epidemic, which has affected people who have great power, immense sums of money, weapons of violence, and means for the propagation of their insanity, may and must be terrible.

IV

One may listen with compassion to the mouthings of a feeble, old, and unarmed idiot in his cap and night-shirt, not contradicting and even humorously acquiescing with him; but when a crowd of able-bodied madmen escape from confinement, armed to the teeth with knives,

swords, and revolvers, wild with excitement, waving their murderous weapons, one not only ceases to acquiesce, but one is unable to feel secure for an instant.

It is the same with the condition of excitement which has been evoked by the French festivities and which is now carrying French and Russian society away. Those who have succumbed to this psychopathic epidemic are the masters of the most terrible weapons of slaughter and destruction.

It is true that it was constantly proclaimed in all the speeches, in all the toasts pronounced at these festivities, and in all the articles upon them, that the object of what was taking place was the establishment of peace. Even the partisans of war, the Russian correspondent previously cited amongst them, speak not of any hatred toward the conquerors of the lost provinces, but of a love which somehow hates.

However, we are well aware of the cunning of those that suffer from mental diseases, and this constant iteration of a desire for peace, and silence as to the sentiments in every man's mind, is precisely a threat of the worst significance.

In his reply at the dinner at the Elysée the Russian ambassador said: —

"Before proposing a toast to which every one will respond from the depths of his soul, not only those within these walls, but also, and with the same enthusiasm, all those whose hearts are at the present moment beating in unison with ours, far away or around us in great and beautiful France, as in Russia, permit me to offer an expression of the deepest gratitude for the welcome, addressed by you to the admiral whom the Tsar deputed to return the Kronstadt visit. In the high position which you occupy, your words express the full meaning of the glorious and peaceful festivities which are now being celebrated with such remarkable unanimity, loyalty, and sincerity."

The same entirely baseless reference to peace may be found in the speech of the French president.

"The links of love which unite Russia and France," he said, "were strengthened two years ago by the touching

manifestations of which our fleet was the object at Kronstadt, and are becoming every day more binding ; and the *honest* interchange of our friendly sentiments must inspire all those who have at heart the welfare of peace, security, and confidence," etc.

In both speeches the benefits of peace, and of peaceful festivities, are alluded to quite unexpectedly and without any occasion.

The same thing is observable in the interchange of telegrams between the Russian emperor and the president of the Republic.

The emperor telegraphs : —

"At the moment when the Russian fleet is leaving France it is my ardent wish to express to you how touched and gratified I am by the chivalrous and splendid reception which my sailors have everywhere experienced on French soil. The expressions of warm sympathy which have been manifested once again with so much eloquence will add a fresh bond to those which unite the two countries, and will, I trust, contribute to strengthen the general *peace* which is the object of our most constant efforts and desires."

The French president replies : —

"The telegram, for which I thank your majesty, reached me when on the point of leaving Toulon to return to Paris.

"The magnificent fleet on which I had the great satisfaction of saluting the Russian pennant in French waters, the cordial and spontaneous reception which your brave sailors have everywhere received in France, prove gloriously once again the sincere sympathies which unite our two countries. They show at the same time a deep faith in the beneficent influence which may weld together two great nations devoted to the cause of *peace*."

Again, in both telegrams, without the slightest occasion, are allusions to peace which have nothing at all to do with the reception of the sailors.

There is no single speech or article in which it is not said that the purpose of all these orgies is the peace of

Europe. At a dinner given by the representatives of the Russian press, all speak of peace. M. Zola, who, a short time previously, had written that war was inevitable, and even serviceable; M. de Vogüé, who more than once has stated the same in print, — say, neither of them, a word as to war, but speak only of peace. The sessions of parliament open with speeches upon the past festivities; the speakers mention that such festivities are an assurance of peace to Europe.

It is as if a man should come into a peaceful company, and commence energetically to assure every one present that he has not the least intention of knocking out any one's teeth, blackening their eyes, or breaking their arms, but has only the most peaceful ideas for passing the evening.

"But no one doubts it," one is inclined to say, "and if you really have such evil intentions, at least do not presume to mention them."

In many of the articles describing the festivities a naïve satisfaction is clearly expressed that no one during them alluded to what it was determined, by silent consent, to hide from everybody, and that only one incautious fellow, who was immediately removed by the police, voiced what all had in their minds by shouting, "*À bas l'Allemagne!*" — Down with Germany!

In the same way children are often so delighted at being able to conceal an escapade that their very high spirits betray them.

Why, indeed, be so glad that no one said anything about war, if the subject were not uppermost in our minds?

V

No one is thinking of war; only milliards are being spent upon preparations for it, and millions of men are under arms in France and Russia.

"But all this is done to insure peace. *Si vis pacem para bellum. L'empire c'est la paix. La République c'est la paix.*"

But if such be the case, why are the military advantages of a Franco-Russian alliance in the event of a war with Germany not only explained in every paper and magazine published for a so-called educated people, but also in the *Village Messenger*, a paper published for the people by the Russian government? Why is it inculcated to this unfortunate people, cheated by its own government, that "to be in friendly relations with France is profitable to Russia, because if, unexpectedly, the before-mentioned states (Germany, Austria, and Italy) made up their minds to declare war with Russia, then, though with God's help she might be able to withstand them by herself, and defeat even so considerable an alliance, the feat would not be an easy one, and great sacrifices and losses would be entailed by success." [1]

And why in all French schools is history taught from the primer of M. Lavisse (twenty-first edition, 1889,) in which the following is inserted: —

"Since the insurrection of the Commune was put down France has had no further troubles. The day following the war she again resumed work. She paid Germany without difficulty the enormous war indemnity of five milliards.

"But France lost her military renown during the war of 1870. She lost part of her territory. More than fifteen thousand inhabitants of our departments of the Upper Rhine, Lower Rhine, and the Moselle who were good Frenchmen have been compelled to become Germans. But they are not resigned to their fate. They detest Germany; they continue to hope that they may once more be Frenchmen.

"But Germany appreciates its victory, and it is a great country, all the inhabitants of which sincerely love their fatherland, and whose soldiers are brave and well disciplined. In order to recover from Germany what she took from us we must be good citizens and soldiers. It is to make you good soldiers that your teachers instruct you in the history of France.

"The history of France proves that in our country the sons have always avenged the disasters of their fathers.

[1] *Siel'sky Viestnik*, 1893, No. 43.

"Frenchmen in the time of Charles VII. avenged the defeat of their fathers at Crécy, at Poitiers, at Agincourt.

"It is for you, boys being educated in our schools, to avenge the defeat of your fathers at Sedan and at Metz.

"It is your duty — the great duty of your life. You must ever bear that in mind."

At the foot of the page is a series of questions upon the preceding paragraphs. The questions are the following: —

"What has France lost by losing part of her territory?"

"How many Frenchmen have become Germans by the loss of this territory?"

"Do these Frenchmen love Germany?"

"What must we do to recover some day what Germany has taken from us?"

In addition to these there are certain "Reflections on Book VII.," where it is said that "the children of France must not forget her defeat of 1870"; that they must bear on their hearts the burden of this remembrance," but that "this memory must not discourage them, on the contrary, it must excite their courage."

So that if, in official speeches, peace is mentioned with such emphasis, behind the scenes the lawfulness, profit, and necessity of war is incessantly urged upon the people, the rising generation, and in general upon all Frenchmen and Russians.

"We do not think of war, we are only working for peace."

One feels inclined to inquire, "*Qui diable trompe-t-on ici?*" if the question were worth asking, and it were not too evident who are the unhappy deluded ones.

The deluded ones are always the same eternally deluded, foolish working-folk, those who, with horny hands, make all these ships, forts, arsenals, barracks, cannon, steamers, harbors, piers, palaces, halls, and places with triumphal arches, and who print all these books and papers, and who procure and transport all these pheasants and ortolans and oysters and wines which are to be eaten and drunk by those who are brought up, educated,

and maintained by the working-class, and who, in turn, deceive and prepare for it the worst disasters.

Always the same good-natured, foolish working-folk, who, yawning, showing their white, healthy teeth, childishly and naïvely pleased at the sight of admirals and presidents in full dress, of flags waving above their heads, and fireworks, and triumphal music; for whom, before they can look round, there will be no more admirals, or presidents, or flags, or music; but only a damp and empty field of battle, cold, hunger, and pain; before them a murderous enemy; behind, relentless officers preventing their escape; blood, wounds, putrefying bodies, and senseless, unnecessary death.

While, on the other hand, those who have been made much of at Paris and Toulon will be seated, after a good dinner, with glasses of choice wine beside them and cigars between their teeth, in a warm cloth tent, marking upon a map with pins such and such places upon which a certain amount of "food for cannon" is to be expended — "food" composed of those same foolish people — in order finally to capture this fortified place or the other, and to obtain a certain little ribbon or grade.

VI

"But nothing of the kind exists; we have no bellicose intentions," it is replied. "All that has happened is the expression of mutual sympathy between two nations. What can be amiss in the triumphal and honorable reception of the representatives of a friendly nation by the representatives of another nation? What can be wrong in this, even if we admit that the alliance is significant of a protection from a dangerous neighbor who threatens Europe with war?"

It is wrong, because it is false — a most evident and insolent falsehood, inexcusable, iniquitous.

It is false, this suddenly begotten love of Russians

for French and French for Russians. And it is false, this insinuation of our dislike to the Germans, and our distrust of them. And more false still is it that the aim of all these indecent and insane orgies is supposed to be the preservation of the peace of Europe.

We are all aware that we neither felt before, nor have felt since, any special love for the French, or any animosity toward the Germans.

We are told that Germany has projects against Russia, that the Triple Alliance threatens to destroy our peace and that of Europe, and that our alliance with France will secure an equal balance of power and be a guarantee of peace. But the assertion is so manifestly stupid that I am ashamed to refute it seriously. For this to be so — that is, for the alliance to guarantee peace — it would be necessary to make the Powers mathematically equal. If the preponderance were on the side of the Franco-Russian alliance, the danger would be the same, or even greater, because if Wilhelm, who is at the head of the Triple Alliance, is a menace to peace, France, who cannot be reconciled to the loss of her provinces, would be a still greater menace. The Triple Alliance was called an alliance of peace, whereas for us it proved an alliance of war. Just so now the Franco-Russian alliance can only be viewed truly as an alliance for war.

Moreover, if peace depend upon an even balance of power, how are those units to be defined between which the balance is to be established?

England asserts that the Franco-Russian alliance is a menace to her security, which necessitates a new alliance on her part. And into precisely how many units is Europe to be divided that this even balance may be attained?

Indeed, if there be such a necessity for equilibrium, then in every society of men a man stronger than his fellows is already dangerous, and the rest must join defensive alliances in order to resist him.

It is asked, "What is wrong in France and Russia expressing their mutual sympathies for the preservation of

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peace?" The expression is wrong because it is false, and a falsehood once pronounced never ends harmlessly.

The devil was a murderer and the father of lies. Falsehood always leads to murder; and most of all in such a case as this.

Just what is now taking place occurred before our last Turkish war, when a sudden love on our part was supposed to have been awakened toward certain Slavonic brethren none had heard of for centuries; though French, Germans, and English always have been, and are, incomparably nearer and dearer to us than a few Bulgarians, Servians, or Montenegrins. And on that occasion just the same enthusiasm, receptions, and solemnities were to be observed, blown into existence by men like Aksakof and Katkof, who are already mentioned in Paris as model patriots. Then, as now, the suddenly begotten love of Russ for Slav was only a thing of words.

Then in Moscow as now in Paris, when the affair began, people ate, drank, talked nonsense to one another, were much affected by their noble feelings, spoke of union and of peace, passing over in silence the main business — the project against Turkey.

The press goaded on the excitement, and by degrees the government took a hand in the game. Servia revolted. Diplomatic notes began to circulate and semi-official articles to appear. The press lied, invented, and fumed more and more, and in the end Alexander II., who really did not desire war, was obliged to consent to it; and what we know took place, the loss of hundreds of thousands of innocent men, and the brutalizing and befooling of millions.

What took place at Paris and Toulon, and has since been fomented by the press, is evidently leading to a like or a worse calamity.

At first, in the same manner, to the strains of the "Marseillaise" and "God save the Tsar," certain generals and ministers drink to France and Russia in honor of various regiments and fleets; the press publishes its falsehoods; idle crowds of wealthy people, not

knowing how to apply their strength and time, chatter patriotic speeches, stirring up animosity against Germany; and in the end, however peaceful Alexander III. may be, circumstances will so combine that he will be unable to avoid war, which will be demanded by all who surround him, by the press, and, as always seems in such cases, by the entire public opinion of the nation. And before we can look round, the usual ominous absurd proclamation will appear in the papers: —

"We, by God's grace, the autocratic great Emperor of all Russia, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., etc., proclaim to all our true subjects, that, for the welfare of these our beloved subjects, bequeathed by God into our care, we have found it our duty before God to send them to slaughter. God be with us."

The bells will peal, long-haired men will dress in golden sacks and pray for successful slaughter. And the old story will begin again, the awful customary acts.

The editors of the daily press, happy in the receipt of an increased income, will begin virulently to stir men up to hatred and manslaughter in the name of patriotism. Manufacturers, merchants, contractors for military stores will hurry joyously about their business, in the hope of double receipts.

All sorts of government functionaries will buzz about, foreseeing a possibility of purloining something more than usual. The military authorities will hurry hither and thither, drawing double pay and rations, and with the expectation of receiving for the slaughter of other men various silly little ornaments which they so highly prize, as ribbons, crosses, orders, and stars. Idle ladies and gentlemen will make a great fuss, entering their names in advance for the Red Cross Society, and ready to bind up the wounds of those whom their husbands and brothers will mutilate, and they will imagine that in so doing they are performing a most Christian work.

And, smothering despair within their souls by songs, licentiousness, and wine, men will trail along, torn from peaceful labor, from their wives, mothers, and children, — hundreds of thousands of simple-minded, good-natured

men with murderous weapons in their hands, — anywhere they may be driven.

They will march, freeze, hunger, suffer sickness, and die from it, or finally come to some place where they will be slain by thousands, or kill thousands themselves with no reason — men whom they have never seen before, and who neither have done nor could do them any mischief.

And when the number of sick, wounded, and killed becomes so great that there are not hands enough left to pick them up, and when the air is so infected with the putrefying scent of the "food for cannon" that even the authorities find it disagreeable, a truce will be made, the wounded will be picked up anyhow, the sick will be brought in and huddled together in heaps, the killed will be covered with earth and lime, and once more all the crowd of deluded men will be led on and on till those who have devised the project weary of it, or till those who thought to find it profitable receive their spoil.

And so once more men will be made savage, fierce, and brutal, and love will wane in the world, and the Christianizing of mankind, which has already begun, will lapse for scores and hundreds of years. And so once more the men who reaped profit from it all will assert with assurance that since there has been a war there must needs have been one, and that other wars must follow, and they will again prepare future generations for a continuance of slaughter, depraving them from their childhood.

VII

Hence, when such patriotic demonstrations as the Toulon festivities take place, — though they only constrain from a distance the wills of men, and bind them to those accustomed villainies which are always the outcome of patriotism, — every one who realizes the true import of these festivities cannot but protest against

what is tacitly included in them. And, therefore, when those gentlemen, the journalists, assert that every Russian sympathizes with what took place at Kronstadt, Toulon, and Paris, and that this alliance for life and death is sealed by the desire of the entire nation; and when the Russian Minister of Education assures the French minister that all his brigade of children, clerks, and scientists share his feelings; or when the commander of a Russian squadron assures the French that all Russia will be grateful to them for their reception; and when protopresbyters answer for their flock, and assert that the prayers of Frenchmen for the welfare of the imperial house are joyously echoed in the hearts of the Russian *Tsar-loving* nation; and when the Russian ambassador in Paris, as the representative of the Russian people, states, after a dish of *ortolans à la soubise*, or *lagopèdes glacés*, with a glass of Grand Moët champagne in his hand, that all Russian hearts, beating in unison with his heart, are filled with sudden and exclusive love for *la belle France*, — then we, men not yet idiots, regard it as a sacred duty, not only for ourselves, but for tens of millions of Russians, to protest most energetically against such a statement, and to affirm that our hearts do not beat in unison with those of these gentlemen, — the journalists, ministers of education, commanders of squadrons, protopresbyters, and ambassadors; but on the contrary, are filled with indignation and disgust at the pernicious falsehood and wrong which, consciously or unconsciously, they are spreading by their words and deeds. Let them drink as much Moët as they please; let them write articles and make speeches from themselves and for themselves; but we who regard ourselves as Christians, cannot admit that what all these gentlemen write and say is binding upon us.

This we cannot admit because we know what lies hidden beneath at these tipsy ecstasies, speeches, and embracings, which resemble, not a confirmation of peace as we are assured, but rather those orgies and revelings to which criminals are addicted when planning their joint crimes.

VIII

About four years ago the first swallow of this Toulon spring, a well-known French agitator for a war with Germany, came to Russia to prepare the way for the Franco-Russian alliance, and paid a visit to us in the country. He came to us when we were all engaged cutting the hay crop, and when we had come into lunch and made our guest's acquaintance, he began at once to tell us how he had fought, been taken prisoner, made his escape, and finally pledged himself as a patriot — a fact of which he was evidently proud — never to cease agitating for a war with Germany until the boundaries and glory of France had been reëstablished.

All our guest's arguments as to the necessity of an alliance of France with Russia in order to reconstruct the former boundary, power, and glory of his country, and to assure our security against the evil intentions of Germany, had no success in our circle.

To his arguments that France could never settle down until she had recaptured her lost provinces, we replied that neither could Russia be at rest till she had been avenged for Jena, and that if the *revanche* of France should happen to be successful, Germany in her turn would desire revenge, and so on without end.

To his arguments that it was the duty of France to recover the sons that had been snatched from her, we replied that the condition of the majority of the working population of Alsace-Lorraine under the rule of Germany had probably suffered no change for the worse since the days when it was ruled by France, and the fact that some of the Alsatians preferred to be registered as Frenchmen and not as Germans, and that he, our guest, wished to reëstablish the fame of the French arms, was no reason to renew the awful calamities which a war would cause, or even to sacrifice a single human life.

To his arguments that it was very well for us to talk like that, who had never endured what France had, and

that we would speak very differently if the Baltic provinces, or Poland, were to be taken from us, we replied that, even from the imperial standpoint, the loss of the Baltic provinces or Poland could in no wise be considered as a calamity, but rather as an advantage, as it would decrease the necessity of armed forces and State expenses; and that from the Christian point of view one can never admit the justice of war, as war demands murder; while Christianity not only prohibits all killing, but demands of us the betterment of all men, regarding all men as brothers, without distinction of nationalities.

A Christian nation, we said, which engages in war, ought, in order to be logical, not only to take down the cross from its church steeples, turn the churches to some other use, give the clergy other duties, having first prohibited the preaching of the Gospel, but also ought to abandon all the requirements of morality which flow from the Christian law.

"*C'est à prendre ou à laisser*," we said. Until Christianity be abolished it is only possible to attract mankind toward war by cunning and fraud, as now practised. We who see this fraud and cunning cannot give way to it.

Since, during this conversation, there was no music or champagne, or anything to confuse our senses, our guest merely shrugged his shoulders, and, with the amiability of a Frenchman, said he was very grateful for the cordial welcome he had experienced in our house, but was sorry that his views were not as well received.

IX

After this conversation we went out into the hay-field, where our guest, hoping to find the peasants more in sympathy with his ideas, asked me to translate to an old, sickly muzhik, Prokophy by name — who, though suffering from severe hernia, was still working energetically, mowing with us, — his plan for putting pressure on Germany from both sides, the Russian and the French.

The Frenchman explained this to him graphically, by pressing with his white fingers on either side of the mower's coarse shirt, which was damp with perspiration.

I well remember Prokophy's good-humored smile of astonishment when I explained the meaning of the Frenchman's words and action. He evidently took the proposal to squeeze the Germans as a joke, not conceiving that a full-grown and educated man would quietly and soberly speak of war as being desirable.

"Well, but, if we squeeze him from both sides," he answered, smiling, giving one pleasantry for another, as he supposed, "he will be fixed too fast to move. We shall have to let him out somewhere."

I translated this answer to my guest.

"Tell him we love the Russians," he said.

These words astonished Prokophy even more than the proposal to squeeze the Germans, and awoke in him a certain feeling of suspicion.

"Whence does he come?" he inquired.

I replied that he was a wealthy Frenchman.

"And what business has brought him here?" he asked.

When I replied that the Frenchman had come in the hope of persuading the Russians to enter into an alliance with the French in the event of a war with Germany, Prokophy was clearly entirely displeased, and, turning to the women who were sitting close by on a cock of hay, called out to them, in an angry voice, which unwittingly displayed the feelings which had been aroused in him, to go and stack the rest of the hay.

"Well, you crows," he cried, "you are all asleep! Go and stack! A nice time for squeezing the Germans! Look there, the hay has not been turned yet, and it looks as if we might have to begin on the corn on Wednesday." And then, as if afraid of having offended our visitor, he added, smiling good-naturedly and showing his worn teeth, "Better come and work with us, and bring the Germans too. And when we have finished we will have some feasting, and make the Germans join us. They are men like ourselves."

And so saying Prokophy took his sinewy hand from the fork of the rake on which he had been leaning, lifted it on to his shoulder, and went to join the women.

"Oh, le brave homme!" exclaimed the polite Frenchman, laughing. And thus was concluded for the time his diplomatic mission to the Russian people.

The different aspects of these two men — one shining with freshness and high spirits, dressed in a coat of the latest cut, displaying with his white hands, which had never known labor, how the Germans should be squeezed; the other coarse, with haydust in his hair, shrunken with hard work, sunburnt, always weary, and, notwithstanding his severe complaint, always at work: Prokophy, with his fingers swollen with toil, in his large home-made trousers, worn-out shoes, and a great heap of hay upon his shoulders, moving slowly along with that careful economy of stride common to all workingmen, — the different aspects of these two men made much clear to me at the time, which has come back to me vividly since the Toulon-Paris festivities.

One of them represented the class fed and maintained by the people's labor, who in return use up that people as "food for cannon"; while the other was that very "food for cannon" which feeds and maintains those who afterwards so dispose of it.

X

"But France has lost two provinces — children torn from a beloved mother. And Russia cannot permit Germany to make laws for her and rob her of her historical mission in the East, nor risk the chance of losing, like France, her Baltic provinces, Poland, or the Caucasus.

"And Germany cannot hear of the loss of those advantages which she has won at such a sacrifice. And England will yield to none her naval supremacy."

After such word it is generally supposed that a Frenchman, Russian, German, or Englishman should

be ready to sacrifice anything, to regain his lost provinces, establish his influence in the East, secure national unity, or keep his control of the seas.

It is assumed that patriotism is, to start with, a sentiment natural to all men, and that, secondly, it is so highly moral a sentiment that it should be induced in all who have it not.

But neither one nor the other is true. I have lived half-a-century amid the Russian people, and in the great mass of laborers, during that period, I have never once seen or heard any manifestation or expression of this sentiment of patriotism, unless one should count those patriotic phrases which are learned by heart in the army, and repeated from books by the more superficial and degraded of the populace. I have never heard from the people any expression of patriotism, but, on the contrary, I have often listened to expressions of indifference, and even contempt, for any kind of patriotism, by the most venerable and serious of working-folk. I have observed the same thing amongst the laboring classes of other nations, and have received confirmation from educated Frenchmen, Germans, and Englishmen, from observation of their respective working-classes.

The working-classes are too much occupied supporting the lives of themselves and of their families, a duty which engrosses all their attention, to be able to take an interest in those political questions which are the chief motives of patriotism.

Questions as to the influence of Russia in the East, the unity of Germany, the recovery by France of her lost provinces, or the concession of such a part of one state to another state, do not interest the working-man, not only because, for the most part, he is unacquainted with the circumstances which evoke such questions, but also because the interests of his life are altogether independent of the state and of politics. For a laboring man is altogether indifferent where such-and-such a frontier may be established, to whom Constantinople may belong, whether Saxony or Brunswick shall or shall not be a member of the German Federation,

whether Australia or Montebello shall belong to England, or even to what government they may have to pay taxes, or into what army send their sons.

But it is always a matter of importance to them to know what taxes they will have to pay, how long to serve in the army, how much to pay for their land, and how much to receive for their labor — all questions entirely independent of State and political interests. This is the reason why, notwithstanding the energetic means employed by governments to inculcate patriotism, which is not natural to the people, and to destroy socialism, the latter continues to penetrate further into the laboring masses; whereas patriotism, though so assiduously inculcated, not only makes no headway, but disappears constantly more and more, and is now solely a possession of the upper classes, to whom it is profitable. And if, as sometimes happens, that patriotism takes hold of the masses, as lately in Paris, it is only when the masses have been subjected to some special hypnotic influence by the government and ruling class, and such patriotism lasts only as long as the influence is continued.

Thus, for instance, in Russia, where patriotism, in the form of love for and devotion to the faith, Tsar, and country, is instilled into the people, with extraordinary energy by every means in the hands of the government, — the Church, schools, literature, and every sort of pompous ceremony — the Russian working-man, the hundred millions of the working people, in spite of their undeserved reputation for devotion to faith, Tsar, and country, are a people singularly unduped by patriotism and such devotion.

They are not, for the most part, even acquainted with the orthodox official faith to which they are supposed to be so attached, and whenever they do make acquaintance with it they leave it and become rationalists, — that is, they adopt a creed which cannot be attacked and need not be defended; and notwithstanding the constant, energetic insistence of devotion to the Tsar, they regard in general all authority founded on violence either with condemnation or with total indifference;

their country, if by that word anything is meant outside their village and district, they either do not realize at all, or, if they do, would make no distinctions between it and other countries. So that where formerly Russians would emigrate into Austria or Turkey, they now go with equal indifference in Russia or outside of Russia, in Turkey, or China.

XI

An old friend of mine, who passed the winters alone in the country while his wife, whom he visited from time to time, lived in Paris, often conversed during the long autumn evenings with his steward, an illiterate but shrewd and venerable peasant, who used to come to him in the evening to receive his orders; and my friend once mentioned amongst other things the advantages of the French system of government compared with our own. The occasion was a short time previous to the last Polish insurrection and the intervention of the French government in our affairs. At that time the patriotic Russian press was burning with indignation at this interference, and so excited the ruling classes that our political relations became very strained, and there were rumors of an approaching war with France.

My friend, having read the papers, explained to this peasant the misunderstanding between France and Russia; and coming under the influence of the journal, and being an old military man, said that were war to be declared he would reënter the army and fight with France. At that time a *revanche* against the French for Sevastopol was considered a necessity by patriotic Russians.

"Why should we fight with them?" asked the peasant.

"Why, how can we permit France to dictate to us?"

"Well, you said yourself that they were better governed than we," replied the peasant quite seriously; "let them arrange things as well in Russia."

And my friend told me that he was so taken aback by this argument that he did not know what to reply, and burst into laughter, as one who has just awaked from a delusive dream.

The same argument may be heard from every Russian workman if he has not come under the hypnotic influence of the government. People speak of the Russian's love for his faith, Tsar, and country; and yet a single community of peasants could not be found in Russia which would hesitate one moment had they to choose of two places for emigration — one in Russia, under the "Father-Tsar" (as he is termed only in books), and the holy orthodox faith of his idolized country, but with less or worse land; and the other without the "White-father-Tsar," and without the orthodox faith, somewhere outside Russia, in Prussia, China, Turkey, Austria, only with more and better land — the choice would be in favor of the latter, as we have often had opportunity to observe.

The question as to who shall govern him (and he knows that under any government he will be equally robbed) is for the Russian peasant of infinitely less significance than the question (setting aside even the matter of water), Is the clay soft and will cabbage thrive in it?

But it might be supposed that this indifference on the part of Russians arises from the fact that any government under which they might live would be an improvement on their own, because in Europe there is none worse. But that is not so; for as far as I can judge, one may witness the same indifference among English, Dutch, and German peasants emigrating to America, and among the various nationalities which have emigrated to Russia.

Passing from the control of one European government to another — from Turkish to Austrian, or from French to German — alters so slightly the position of the genuine working-classes, that in no case would the change excite any discontent, if only it be not effected artificially by the government and the ruling classes.

XII

Usually, for a proof of the existence of patriotism one is referred to the display of patriotic sentiment by the people on certain solemn occasions, as in Russia, at the coronation of the Tsar, or his reception after the railway accident on October 29; in France, on the proclamation of war with Prussia; in Germany at the rejoicings after the war; or during the Franco-Russian festivities.

But one ought to take into consideration the way these manifestations are arranged. In Russia, for example, during every progress of the sovereign, delegates are commanded to appear from every peasant community, and materials requisitioned for the reception and welcome of the Tsar.

The enthusiasm of the crowd is for the most part artificially prepared by those who require it, and the degree of enthusiasm exhibited by the crowd is only a clue to the refinements in the art of those who organize such exhibitions. The art has been practised for long, hence the specialists in it have acquired great adroitness in its preparation.

When Alexander II. was still heir apparent, and commanded, as is usual, the Preobrazhensky Regiment, he once paid an after-dinner visit to the regiment, which was in camp at the time.

As soon as his calash came in sight, the soldiers, who were only in their shirts at the time, ran out to welcome their "august commander," as the phrase is, with such enthusiasm, that they all followed the carriage, and many, while running, made the sign of the cross, gazing upon the prince. All who witnessed this reception were deeply moved by this simple attachment of the Russian soldier to the Tsar and his son, and by the genuinely religious, and evidently spontaneous, enthusiasm expressed in their faces, movements, and especially by the signing of the cross.

And yet all this had been artificially prepared in the following manner: —

After a review on the previous day the prince told the commander of the brigade that he would revisit the regiment on the following day.

"When are we to expect your imperial highness?"

"Probably in the evening, only, pray, do not expect me: and let there be no preparation."

As soon as the prince was gone, the commander of the brigade called all the captains of companies together, and gave orders that on the following day all the men should have clean shirts, and the moment the prince's carriage should come in sight (special signalmen were to be sent out to give warning of it) every one should run to meet it, and with shouts of "Hurrah!" run after it, and, moreover, that every tenth man in each company should cross himself whilst running. The color-sergeants drew up the companies, and told off every tenth man to cross himself. "One, two, three, ... eight, nine, ten. Sidorenko, you are to cross yourself. One, two, three, ... Ivanof, to cross yourself."

Thus, what was ordered was accomplished, and an impression of spontaneous enthusiasm was produced upon the prince and upon all who saw it, even upon the soldiers and officers, and even upon the commander of the brigade himself.

The same thing is done, though less peremptorily, wherever patriotic manifestations take place. Thus the Franco-Russian festivities, which strike us as the spontaneous outcome of the nation's feelings, did not happen of their own accord, but were very cleverly prepared and arranged for by the foresight of the French government.

As soon as the advent of the Russian fleet was settled, "at once," I again quote from that official organ, the *Village Messenger*, "not only in large towns upon the somewhat lengthy route from Toulon to Paris, but in many places far removed from it, the organization of festivities was commenced by special committees.

"Contributions were everywhere received to defray the expenses of the welcome. Many towns sent deputations to our ambassador in Paris, praying that our

sailors should be permitted to visit them even for a day or an hour.

"The municipalities of all those towns which our sailors were directed to visit voted vast sums of money — more than a hundred thousand rubles — to promote various festivities and merrymakings, and expressed their readiness to devote even a larger sum to the purpose, if necessary, to make the welcome as magnificent as possible.

"In Paris itself, in addition to the sum voted by the town municipality, a large amount was collected in voluntary contributions by a private committee for the series of entertainments, and the French government decreed over a hundred thousand rubles for the reception of the Russian visitors by the ministers and other authorities. In many places which our sailors were unable to visit it was decided to keep October 13 as a festal day in honor of Russia. A number of towns and departments decided to send to Toulon and Paris special deputies to welcome the Russian visitors, to give them presents in memory of France, or to send them addresses and telegrams of welcome.

"It was decided everywhere to regard October 13 as a national feast-day, and to give a day's holiday to all the school children, and in Paris two days.

"Soldiers undergoing certain sentences were pardoned, in order that they might remember with thankfulness the joyous October 13 in the annals of France.

"To enable the public who wished to visit Toulon to participate in the reception of the Russian squadron, the railways reduced their fares to one-half, and arranged for special trains."

And thus when, by a series of measures undertaken everywhere and at the same time, — always thanks to the power in its hands at the command of the government, — a certain portion of people, chiefly the froth, the town crowds, is brought into an unnaturally excited state, it is said: Look at this spontaneous action of the will of the whole nation!

Such manifestations as those of Toulon and Paris, as

those which take place in Germany at the receptions of the emperor or of Bismarck, or at the manœuvers in Lothringen, as those which are always repeated in Russia at all pompously arranged receptions, only prove that the means of exciting a nation artificially which are at present in the hands of the governments and ruling classes, can always evoke any patriotic manifestation they choose, and afterward label it as the outcome of the patriotic sentiments of the people.

Nothing, on the contrary, proves so clearly the absence of patriotism in the people, as these same excessive measures now used for its artificial excitement and the small results attained with so much effort.

If patriotic sentiments are so natural to a people, why then is it not allowed to express itself of its own accord, instead of being stirred up by every ordinary and extraordinary means?

If only the attempt were made for a time in Russia to abolish at the coronation of the Tsar the taking of the oath of allegiance by the people, the solemn repetition of the prayers for the Tsar during every church service; to forgo the festivals of his birth and saints' days, with illuminations, the pealing of bells, and compulsory idleness, to cease the public exhibition of his portrait, and in prayer-books, calendars, and books of study to print no more the family names of himself and of his family, and of even the pronouns alluding to them, in large letters; to cease to honor him by special books and papers published for that purpose; to put an end to imprisonment for the least word of disrespect concerning him, — let us see these things altered for a time, and then we could know how far it is inherent in the people, in the genuine working-class. Prokophy and Ivan the village elder, as they are always assured, and as every foreigner is assured, idolize the Tsar, who one way or another betrays them into the hands of landowners and of the rich in general.

So it is in Russia. But if only in like manner the ruling classes in Germany, France, Italy, England, and America were to do what they so persistently accom-

plish in the inculcation of patriotism, attachment, and obedience to the existing government, we should be able to see how far this supposed patriotism is natural to the nations of our time.

From infancy, by every possible means, — class-books, church-services, sermons, speeches, books, papers, songs, poetry, monuments, — the people is stupefied in one direction; and then either by force or by bribe, several thousands of the people are assembled, and when these, joined by the idlers always present at every sight, to the sound of cannon and music, and inflamed by the glitter and brilliance about them, will commence to shout out what others are shouting in front of them, we are told that this is the expression of the sentiment of the entire nation.

But, in the first place, these thousands, or even tens of thousands, who shout something or other on these occasions, are only a mere ten-thousandth part of the whole nation; and, in the second, of these ten thousand men who shout and wave their hats, the greater part, if not collected by the authorities, as in Russia, is artificially attracted by some kind of bait; and in the third place, of all these thousands there are scarcely a hundred who know the real meaning of what is taking place, and the majority would shout and wave their hats in just the same way for an exactly opposite intention; and in the fourth place, the police is present with power to quiet and silence at once any who might attempt to shout in a fashion not desired or demanded by government, as was energetically done during the Franco-Russian festivities.

In France, war with Russia was welcomed with just the same zest in the reign of Napoleon I., then the war against Alexander I., then that of the allied forces under Napoleon III.; the Bourbons have been welcomed in the same fashion as the House of Orléans, the Republic, Napoleon III., and Boulanger. And in Russia the same welcome has been accorded to Peter, Catherine, Paul, Alexander, Constantine, Nicolas, the Duke of Lichtenberg, the "brotherly Slavonians," the King of Prussia,

the French sailors, and any others the authorities desired to welcome. And just the same thing has taken place in England, America, Germany, and Italy.

What is called patriotism in our time is, on the one hand, only a certain disposition of mind, constantly produced and sustained in the minds of the people in a direction desired by the existing government, by schools, religion, and a subsidized press; and on the other hand it is a temporary excitement of the lowest stratum, morally and intellectually, of the people, produced by special means by the ruling classes, and finally acclaimed as the permanent expression of the people's will.

The patriotism of states oppressed by a foreign power presents no exception. It is equally unnatural to the working masses, and artificially induced by the higher classes.

XIII

"But if the common people have no sentiment of patriotism, it is because they have not yet developed this elevated feeling natural to every educated man. If they do not possess this nobility of sentiment, it must be cultivated in them. And this the government does."

So say, generally, the ruling classes, with such assurance that patriotism is a noble feeling, that the simple populace, who are ignorant of it, think themselves, in consequence, at fault, and try to persuade themselves that they really possess it, or at least pretend to have it.

But what is this elevated sentiment which, according to the opinion of the ruling classes, must be educated in the people?

The sentiment, in its simplest definition, is merely the preference for one's own country or nation above the country or nation of any one else; a sentiment perfectly expressed in the German patriotic song, "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles," in which one need only substitute for the first two words, "Russland," "Frankreich,"

"Italien," or the name of any other country, to obtain a formula of the elevated sentiment of patriotism for that country.

It is quite possible that governments regard this sentiment as both useful and desirable, and of service to the unity of the State; but one must see that this sentiment is by no means elevated, but, on the contrary, very stupid and immoral. Stupid, because if every country were to consider itself superior to others, it is evident that all but one would be in error; and immoral because it leads all who possess it to aim at benefiting their own country or nation at the expense of every other — an inclination exactly at variance with the fundamental moral law, which all admit, "Do not unto others as you would not wish them to do unto you."

Patriotism may have been a virtue in the ancient world when it compelled men to serve the highest idea of those days, — the fatherland. But how can patriotism be a virtue in these days when it requires of men an ideal exactly opposite to that of our religion and morality, — an admission, not of the equality and fraternity of all men, but of the dominance of one country or nation over all others? But not only is this sentiment no virtue in our times, but it is indubitably a vice; for this sentiment of patriotism cannot now exist, because there is neither material nor moral foundation for its conception.

Patriotism might have had some meaning in the ancient world, when every nation was more or less uniform in composition, professing one national faith, and subject to the unrestrained authority of its great and adored sovereign, representing, as it were, an island, in an ocean of barbarians who sought to overflow it.

It is conceivable that in such circumstances patriotism — the desire of protection from barbarian assault, ready not only to destroy the social order, but threatening it with plunder, slaughter, captivity, slavery, and the violation of its women — was a natural feeling; and it is conceivable that men, in order to defend themselves

and their fellow-countrymen, might prefer their own nation to any other, and cherish a feeling of hatred toward the surrounding barbarians, and destroy them for self-protection.

But what significance can this feeling have in these Christian days?

On what grounds and for what reason can a man of our time follow this example — a Russian, for instance, kill Frenchmen; or a Frenchman, Germans — when he is well aware, however uneducated he may be, that the men of the country or nation against whom his patriotic animosity is excited are no barbarians, but men, Christians like himself, often of the same faith as himself, and, like him, desirous of peace and the peaceful interchange of labor; and besides, bound to him, for the most part, either by the interest of a common effort, or by mercantile or spiritual endeavors, or even by both? So that very often people of one country are nearer and more needful to their neighbors than are these latter to one another, as in the case of laborers in the service of foreign employers of labor, of commercial houses, scientists, and the followers of art.

Moreover, the very conditions of life are now so changed, that what we call fatherland, what we are asked to distinguish from everything else, has ceased to be clearly defined, as it was with the ancients, when men of the same country were of one nationality, one state, and one religion.

The patriotism of an Egyptian, a Jew, a Greek is comprehensible, for in defending his country he defended his religion, his nationality, his fatherland, and his state.

But in what terms can one express to-day the patriotism of an Irishman in the United States, who by his religion belongs to Rome, by his nationality to Ireland, by his citizenship to the United States? In the same position is a Bohemian in Austria, a Pole in Russia, Prussia, or Austria; a Hindu in England; a Tartar or Armenian in Russia or Turkey. Not to mention the people of these particular conquered nations, the people of the most homogeneous countries, Russia, France,

Prussia, can no longer possess the sentiment of patriotism which was natural to the ancients, because very often the chief interests of their lives — of the family, for instance, where a man is married to a woman of another nationality; commercial, where his capital is invested abroad; spiritual, scientific, or artistic — are no longer contained within the limits of his country, but outside it, in the very state, perhaps, against which his patriotic animosity is being excited.

But patriotism is chiefly impossible to-day because, however much we may have endeavored during eighteen hundred years to conceal the meaning of Christianity, it has nevertheless leaked into our lives, and controls them to such an extent that the dullest and most unrefined of men must see to-day the complete incompatibility of patriotism with the moral law by which we live.

XIV

Patriotism was a necessity in the formation and consolidation of powerful states composed of different nationalities and acting in mutual defense against barbarians. But as soon as Christian enlightenment transformed these states from within, giving to all an equal standing, patriotism became not only needless, but the sole impediment to a union between nations for which, by reason of their Christian consciousness, they were prepared.

Patriotism to-day is the cruel tradition of an outlived period, which exists not merely by its inertia, but because the governments and ruling classes, aware that not their power only, but their very existence, depends upon it, persistently excite and maintain it among the people, both by cunning and violence.

Patriotism to-day is like a scaffolding which was needful once to raise the walls of the building, but which, though it presents the only obstacle to the house being inhabited, is none the less retained, because its existence is of profit to certain persons.

For a long while there has not been and cannot be any reason for dissension between Christian nations. It is even impossible to imagine, how and for what, Russian and German workmen, peacefully and conjointly working on the frontiers or in the capitals, should quarrel. And much less easily can one imagine animosity between some Kazan peasant who supplies Germans with wheat, and a German who supplies him with scythes and machines.

It is the same between French, German, and Italian workmen. And it would be even ridiculous to speak of the possibility of a quarrel between men of science, art, and letters of different nationalities, who have the same objects of common interest independent of nationalities or of governments.

But the various governments cannot leave the nations in peace, because the chief, if not the sole, justification for the existence of governments is the pacification of nations, and the settlement of their hostile relationships. Hence governments evoke such hostile relationships under the aspect of patriotism, in order to exhibit their powers of pacification. Somewhat like a gipsy who, having put some pepper under a horse's tail, and beaten it in its stall, brings it out, and hanging on to the reins, pretends that he can hardly control the excited animal.

We are told that governments are very careful to maintain peace between nations. But how do they maintain it? People live on the Rhine in peaceful communication with one another. Suddenly, owing to certain quarrels and intrigues between kings and emperors, a war commences; and we learn that the French government has considered it necessary to regard this peaceful people as Frenchmen. Centuries pass, the population has become accustomed to their position, when animosity again begins amongst the governments of the great nations, and a war is started upon the most empty pretext, because the German government considers it necessary to regard this population as Germans: and between all Frenchmen and Germans is kindled a mutual feeling of ill-will.

Or else Germans and Russians live in friendly fashion on their frontiers, pacifically exchanging the results of their labor; when all of a sudden those same institutions, which only exist to maintain the peace of nations, begin to quarrel, are guilty of one stupidity after another, and finally are unable to invent anything better than a most childish method of self-punishment in order to have their own way, and do a bad turn to their opponent, — which in this case is especially easy, as those who arrange a war of tariffs are not the sufferers from it; it is others who suffer, — and so arrange such a war of tariffs as took place not long ago between Russia and Germany. And so between Russians and Germans a feeling of animosity is fostered, which is still more inflamed by the Franco-Russian festivities, and may lead at one moment or another to a bloody war.

I have mentioned these last two examples of the influence of a government over the people used to excite their animosity against another people, because they have occurred in our times: but in all history there is no war which was not hatched by the governments, the governments alone, independent of the interests of the people, to whom war is always pernicious even when successful.

The government assures the people that they are in danger from the invasion of another nation, or from foes in their midst, and that the only way to escape this danger is by the slavish obedience of the people to their government. This fact is seen most prominently during revolutions and dictatorships, but it exists always and everywhere that the power of the government exists. Every government explains its existence, and justifies its deeds of violence, by the argument that if it did not exist the condition of things would be very much worse. After assuring the people of its danger the government subordinates it to control, and when in this condition compels it to attack some other nation. And thus the assurance of the government is corroborated in the eyes of the people, as to the danger of attack from other nations.

"*Divide et impera.*"

Patriotism in its simplest, clearest, and most indubi-

table signification is nothing else but a means of obtaining for the rulers their ambitions and covetous desires, and for the ruled the abdication of human dignity, reason, and conscience, and a slavish enthralment to those in power. And as such it is recommended wherever it is preached.

Patriotism is slavery.

Those who preach peace by arbitration argue thus: Two animals cannot divide their prey otherwise than by fighting; as also is the case with children, savages, and savage nations. But reasonable people settle their differences by argument, persuasion, and by referring the decision of the question to other impartial and reasonable persons. So the nations should act to-day. This argument seems quite correct. The nations of our time have reached the period of reasonableness, have no animosity toward one another, and might decide their differences in a peaceful fashion. But this argument applies only so far as it has reference to the people, and only to the people who are not under the control of a government. But the people that subordinate themselves to a government cannot be reasonable, because the subordination is in itself a sign of a want of reason.

How can we speak of the reasonableness of men who promise in advance to accomplish everything, including murder, that the government — that is, certain men who have attained a certain position — may command? Men who can accept such obligations, and resignedly subordinate themselves to anything that may be prescribed by persons unknown to them in Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, cannot be considered reasonable; and the governments, that is, those who are in possession of such power, can still less be considered reasonable, and cannot but misuse it, and become dazed by such insane and dreadful power.

This is why peace between nations cannot be attained by reasonable means, by conventions, by arbitration, as long as the subordination of the people to the government continues, a condition always unreasonable and always pernicious.

But the subordination of people to governments will exist as long as patriotism exists, because all governmental authority is founded upon patriotism, that is, upon the readiness of people to subordinate themselves to authority in order to defend their nation, country, or state from dangers which are supposed to threaten.

The power of the French kings over their people before the Revolution was founded on patriotism; upon it too was based the power of the Committee of Public Welfare after the Revolution; upon it was erected the power of Napoleon, both as consul and as emperor; upon it, after the downfall of Napoleon, was based the power of the Bourbons, then that of the Republic, Louis Philippe, and again of the Republic; then of Napoleon III., and again of the Republic, and upon it finally rested the power of M. Boulanger.

It is dreadful to say so, but there is not, nor has there been, any conjoint violence of one people against another which was not accomplished in the name of patriotism. In its name the Russians fought the French, and the French the Russians; in its name Russians and French are preparing to fight the Germans, and the Germans to wage war on two frontiers. And such is the case not only with wars. In the name of patriotism the Russians stifle the Poles, the Germans persecute the Slavonians, the men of the Commune killed those of Versailles, and those of Versailles the men of the Commune.

XV

It would seem that, owing to the spread of education, of speedier locomotion, of greater intercourse between different nations, to the widening of literature, and chiefly to the decrease of danger from other nations, the fraud of patriotism ought daily to become more difficult and at length impossible to practise.

But the truth is that these very means of general external education, facilitated locomotion and intercourse, and especially the spread of literature, being captured

and constantly more and more controlled by government, confer on the latter such possibilities of exciting a feeling of mutual animosity between nations, that in degree as the uselessness and harmfulness of patriotism have become manifest, so also has increased the power of the government and ruling class to excite patriotism among the people.

The difference between that which was and that which is consists solely in the fact that now a much larger number of men participate in the advantages which patriotism confers on the upper classes, hence a much larger number of men are employed in spreading and sustaining this astounding superstition.

The more difficult the government finds it to retain its power, the more numerous are the men who share it.

In former times a small band of rulers held the reins of power, emperors, kings, dukes, their soldiers and assistants; whereas now the power and its profits are shared not only by government officials and by the clergy, but by capitalists — great and small, landowners, bankers, members of Parliament, professors, village officials, men of science, and even artists, but particularly by authors and journalists.

And all these people, consciously or unconsciously, spread the deceit of patriotism, which is indispensable to them if the profits of their position are to be preserved.

And the fraud, thanks to the means for its propagation, and to the participation in it of a much larger number of people, having become more powerful, is continued so successfully, that, notwithstanding the increased difficulty of deceiving, the extent to which the people are deceived is the same as ever.

A hundred years ago the uneducated classes, who had no idea of what composed their government, or by what nations they were surrounded, blindly obeyed the local government officials and nobles by whom they were enslaved, and it was sufficient for the government, by bribes and rewards, to remain on good terms

with these nobles and officials, in order to squeeze from the people all that was required.

Whereas now, when the people can, for the most part, read, know more or less of what their government consists, and what nations surround them; when working-men constantly and easily move from place to place, bringing back information of what is happening in the world, — the simple demand that the orders of the government must be accomplished is not sufficient; it is needful as well to cloud those true ideas about life which the people have, and to inculcate unnatural ideas as to the condition of their existence, and the relationship to it of other nations.

And so, thanks to the development of literature, reading, and the facilities of travel, governments which have their agents everywhere, by means of statutes, sermons, schools, and the press, inculcate everywhere upon the people the most barbarous and erroneous ideas as to their advantages, the relationship of nations, their qualities and intentions; and the people, so crushed by labor that they have neither the time nor the power to understand the significance or test the truth of the ideas which are forced upon them or of the demands made upon them in the name of their welfare, put themselves unmurmuringly under the yoke.

Whereas working-men who have freed themselves from unremitting labor and become educated, and who have, therefore, it might be supposed, the power of seeing through the fraud which is practised upon them, are subjected to such a coercion of threats, bribes, and all the hypnotic influence of governments, that, almost without exception, they desert to the side of the government, and by entering some well-paid and profitable employment, as priest, schoolmaster, officer, or functionary, become participators in spreading the deceit which is destroying their comrades.

It is as if nets were laid at the entrances to education, in which those who by some means or other escape from the masses bowed down by labor, are inevitably caught.

At first, when one understands the cruelty of all this deceit, one feels indignant in spite of oneself against those who from personal ambition or greedy advantage propagate this cruel fraud which destroys the souls as well as the bodies of men, and one feels inclined to accuse them of a sly craftiness; but the fact is that they are deceitful with no wish to deceive, but because they cannot be otherwise. And they deceive, not like Machiavellians, but with no consciousness of their deceit, and usually with the naïve assurance that they are doing something excellent and elevated, a view in which they are persistently encouraged by the sympathy and approval of all who surround them.

It is true that, being dimly aware that on this fraud is founded their power and advantageous position, they are unconsciously drawn toward it; but their action is not based on any desire to delude the people, but because they believe it to be of service to the people.

Thus emperors, kings, and their ministers, with all their coronations, manœuvers, reviews, visiting one another, dressing up in various uniforms, going from place to place, and deliberating with serious faces as to how they may keep peace between nations supposed to be inimical to each other, — nations who would never dream of quarreling, — feel quite sure that what they are doing is very reasonable and useful.

In the same way the various ministers, diplomatists, and functionaries — dressed up in uniforms, with all sorts of ribbons and crosses, writing and docketing with great care, upon the best paper, their hazy, involved, altogether needless communications, advices, projects — are quite assured that, without their activity, the entire existence of nations would halt or become deranged.

In the same manner military men, got up in ridiculous costumes, arguing seriously with what rifle or cannon men can be most expeditiously destroyed, are quite certain that their field-days and reviews are most important and essential to the people.

So likewise the priests, journalists, writers of patriotic songs and class-books, who preach patriotism and receive liberal remuneration, are equally satisfied.

And no doubt the organizers of festivities — like the Franco-Russian fêtes — are sincerely affected while pronouncing their patriotic speeches and toasts.

All these people do what they are doing unconsciously, because they must, all their life being founded upon deceit, and because they know not how to do anything else; and coincidently these same acts call forth the sympathy and approbation of all the people amongst whom they are done. Moreover, being all linked together, they approve and justify one another's acts — emperors and kings those of the soldiers, functionaries, and clergymen; and soldiers, functionaries, and clergymen the acts of emperors and kings, while the populace, and especially the town populace, seeing nothing comprehensible in what is done by all these men, unwittingly ascribe to them a special, almost a supernatural, significance.

The people see, for instance, that a triumphal arch is erected; that men bedeck themselves with crowns, uniforms, robes; that fireworks are let off, cannons fired, bells rung, regiments paraded with their bands; that papers and telegrams and messengers fly from place to place, and that strangely arrayed men are busily engaged in hurrying from place to place and much is said and written; and the throng being unable to believe that all this is done (as is indeed the case) without the slightest necessity, attribute to it all a special mysterious significance, and gaze with shouts and hilarity or with silent awe. And on the other hand, this hilarity or silent awe confirms the assurance of those people who are responsible for all these foolish deeds.

Thus, for instance, not long ago, Wilhelm II. ordered a new throne for himself, with some special kind of ornamentation, and having dressed up in a white uniform, with a cuirass, tight breeches, and a helmet with a bird on the top, and enveloped himself in a red mantle, came out to his subjects, and sat down on this new throne,

perfectly assured that his act was most necessary and important; and his subjects not only saw nothing ridiculous in it, but thought the sight most imposing.

XVI

For some time the power of the government over the people has not been maintained by force, as was the case when one nation conquered another and ruled it by force of arms, or when the rulers of an unarmed people had separate legions of janizaries or guards.

The power of the government has for some time been maintained by what is termed public opinion.

A public opinion exists that patriotism is a fine moral sentiment, and that it is right and our duty to regard one's own nation, one's own state, as the best in the world; and flowing naturally from this public opinion is another, namely, that it is right and our duty to acquiesce in the control of a government over ourselves, to subordinate ourselves to it, to serve in the army and submit ourselves to discipline, to give our earnings to the government in the form of taxes, to submit to the decisions of the law-courts, and to consider the edicts of the government as divinely right. And when such public opinion exists, a strong governmental power is formed possessing milliards of money, an organized mechanism of administration, the postal service, telegraphs, telephones, disciplined armies, law-courts, police, submissive clergy, schools, even the press; and this power maintains in the people the public opinion which it finds necessary.

The power of the government is maintained by public opinion, and with this power the government, by means of its organs, — its officials, law-courts, schools, churches, even the press, — can always maintain the public opinion which they need. Public opinion produces the power, and the power produces public opinion. And there appears to be no escape from this position.

Nor indeed would there be, if public opinion were

something fixed, unchangeable, and governments were able to manufacture the public opinion they needed.

But, fortunately, such is not the case; and public opinion is not, to begin with, permanent, unchangeable, stationary; but, on the contrary, is constantly changing, moving with the advance of humanity; and public opinion not only cannot be produced at will by a government, but is that which produces governments and gives them power, or deprives them of it.

It may seem that public opinion is at present stationary, and the same to-day as it was ten years ago; that in relation to certain questions it merely fluctuates, but returns again — as when it replaces a monarchy with a republic, and then the republic with a monarchy; but it has only that appearance when we examine merely the external manifestation or public opinion which is produced artificially by the government.

But we need only take public opinion in its relation to the life of mankind to see that, as with the day or the year, it is never stagnant, but always proceeds along the way by which all humanity advances, as, notwithstanding delays and hesitations, the day or the spring advances by the same path as the sun.

So that, although, judging from external appearances, the position of European nations to-day is almost as it was fifty years ago, the relationship of the nations to these appearances is quite different from what it was then.

Though now, the same as then, exist rulers, troops, taxes, luxury and poverty, Catholicism, orthodoxy, Lutheranism, in former times these existed because public opinion demanded them, whereas now they exist only because the governments artificially maintain what was once a vital public opinion.

If we as seldom remark this movement of public opinion as we notice the movement of water in a river when we ourselves are descending with the current, this is because the imperceptible changes in public opinion influence ourselves as well.

The nature of public opinion is a constant and irresist-

ible movement. If it appears to us to be stationary it is because there are always some who have utilized a certain phase of public opinion for their own profit, and who, in consequence, use every effort to give it an appearance of permanence, and to conceal the manifestations of real opinion, which is already alive, though not yet perfectly expressed, in the consciousness of men. And such people, who adhere to the outworn opinion and conceal the new one, are at the present time those who compose governments and ruling classes, and who preach patriotism as an indispensable condition of human life.

The means which these people can control are immense; but as public opinion is constantly pouring in upon them their efforts must in the end be in vain: the old falls into decrepitude, the new grows.

The longer the manifestation of nascent public opinion is restrained, the more it accumulates, the more energetically will it burst forth.

Governments and ruling classes try with all their strength to conserve that old public opinion of patriotism upon which their power rests, and to smother the expression of the new, which would destroy it.

But to preserve the old and to check the new is possible only up to a certain point; just as, only to a certain extent, is it possible to check running water with a dam.

However much governments may try to arouse in the people a public opinion, of the past, unnatural to them, as to the merit and virtue of patriotism, those of our day believe in patriotism no longer, but espouse more and more the solidarity and brotherhood of nations.

Patriotism promises men nothing but a terrible future, but the brotherhood of nations represents an ideal which is becoming ever more intelligible and more desirable to humanity. Hence the progress of mankind from the old outworn opinion to the new must inevitably take place. This progression is as inevitable as the falling in the spring of the last dry leaves and the appearance of the new from swollen buds.

And the longer this transition is delayed, the more

inevitable it becomes, and the more evident its necessity.

And indeed, one has only to remember what we profess, both as Christians and merely as men of our day, those fundamental moralities by which we are directed in our social, family, and personal existence, and the position in which we place ourselves in the name of patriotism, in order to see what a degree of contradiction we have placed between our conscience and what, thanks to an energetic government influence in this direction, we regard as our public opinion.

One has only thoughtfully to examine the most ordinary demands of patriotism, which are expected of us as the most simple and natural affair, in order to understand to what extent these requirements are at variance with that real public opinion which we already share. We all regard ourselves as free, educated, humane men, or even as Christians, and yet we are all in such a position that were Wilhelm to-morrow to take offense against Alexander, or Mr. N. to write a lively article on the Eastern Question, or Prince So-and-so to plunder some Bulgarians or Servians, or some queen or empress to be put out by something or other, all we educated humane Christians must go and kill people of whom we have no knowledge, and toward whom we are as amicably disposed as to the rest of the world.

And if such an event has not come to pass, it is owing, we are assured, to the love of peace which controls Alexander, or because Nikolaï Alexandrovitch has married the granddaughter of Victoria.

But if another happened to be in the room of Alexander, or if the disposition of Alexander himself were to alter, or if Nicholas the son of Alexander had married Amalia instead of Alice, we should rush at each other like wild beasts, and rip up each other's bellies.

Such is the supposed public opinion of our time, and such arguments are coolly repeated in every liberal and advanced organ of the press.

If we, Christians of a thousand years' standing, have

not already cut one another's throats, it is merely because Alexander III. does not permit us to do so.

But this is awful!

XVII

No feats of heroism are needed to achieve the greatest and most important changes in the existence of humanity; neither the armament of millions of soldiers, nor the construction of new roads and machines, nor the arrangement of exhibitions, nor the organization of workmen's unions, nor revolutions, nor barricades, nor explosions, nor the perfection of aërial navigation; but a change in public opinion.

And to accomplish this change no exertions of the mind are needed, nor the refutation of anything in existence, nor the invention of any extraordinary novelty; it is only needful that we should not succumb to the erroneous, already defunct, public opinion of the past, which governments have induced artificially; it is only needful that each individual should say what he really feels or thinks, or at least that he should not say what he does not think.

And if only a small body of the people were to do so at once, of their own accord, outworn public opinion would fall off us of itself, and a new, living, real opinion would assert itself. And when public opinion should thus have changed without the slightest effort, the internal condition of men's lives which so torments them would change likewise of its own accord.

One is ashamed to say how little is needed for all men to be delivered from those calamities which now oppress them; it is only needful not to lie.

Let people only be superior to the falsehood which is instilled into them, let them decline to say what they neither feel nor think, and at once such a revolution of all the organization of our life will take place as could not be attained by all the efforts of revolu-

tionists during centuries, even were complete power within their hands.

If people would only believe that strength is not in force but in truth, would only not shrink from it either in word or deed, not say what they do not think, not do what they regard as foolish and as wrong!

"But what is there so gravely serious in shouting Vive la France! or, Hurrah for some emperor, king, or conqueror; in putting on a uniform and a court decoration and going and waiting in the anteroom and bowing low and calling men by strange titles and then giving the young and uncultured to understand that all this sort of thing is very praiseworthy?" Or, "Why is the writing of an article in defence of the Franco-Russian alliance, or of the war of tariffs, or in condemnation of Germans, Russians, or Englishmen, of such moment?" Or, "What harm is there in attendance at some patriotic festivity, or in drinking the health and making a speech in favor of people whom one does not love, and with whom one has no business?" Or, "What is of such importance in admitting the use and excellence of treaties and alliances, or in keeping silence when one's own nation is lauded in one's hearing, and other nations are abused and maligned; or when Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Lutheranism are lauded; or some hero of war, as Napoleon, Peter, Boulanger, or Skobelef, is admired?"

All these things seem so unimportant. Yet in these ways which seem unimportant to us, in our refraining from them, in our proving, as far as we can, the unreasonableness that is apparent to us, in this is our chief, our irresistible might, of which that unconquerable force is composed which constitutes real genuine public opinion, that opinion which, while itself advancing, moves all humanity.

The governments know this, and tremble before this force, and strive in every way they can to counteract or become possessed of it.

They know that strength is not in force, but in thought and in clear expression of it, and, therefore, they are more afraid of the expression of independent

thought than of armies; hence they institute censorships, bribe the press, and monopolize the control of religion and of the schools. But the spiritual force which moves the world eludes them; it is neither in books nor in papers; it cannot be trapped, and is always free; it is in the depths of consciousness of mankind. The most powerful and untrammeled force of freedom is that which asserts itself in the soul of man when he is alone, and in the sole presence of himself reflects on the facts of the universe, and then naturally communicates his thoughts to wife, brother, friend, with all those with whom he comes in contact, and from whom he would regard it as sinful to conceal the truth.

No milliards of rubles, no millions of troops, no organization, no wars or revolutions will produce what the simple expression of a free man may, on what he regards as just, independently of what exists or was instilled into him.

One free man will say with truth what he thinks and feels amongst thousands of men who by their acts and words attest exactly the opposite. It would seem that he who sincerely expressed his thought must remain alone, whereas it generally happens that every one else, or the majority at least, have been thinking and feeling the same things but without expressing them.

And that which yesterday was the novel opinion of one man, to-day becomes the general opinion of the majority.

And as soon as this opinion is established, immediately by imperceptible degrees, but beyond power of frustration, the conduct of mankind begins to alter.

Whereas at present, every man, even, if free, asks himself, "What can I do alone against all this ocean of evil and deceit which overwhelms us? Why should I express my opinion? Why indeed possess one? It is better not to reflect on these misty and involved questions. Perhaps these contradictions are an inevitable condition of our existence. And why should I struggle alone with all the evil in the world? Is it not

better to go with the stream which carries me along? If anything can be done, it must be done not alone but in company with others."

And leaving the most powerful of weapons — thought and its expression — which move the world, each man employs the weapon of social activity, not noticing that every social activity is based on the very foundations against which he is bound to fight, and that upon entering the social activity which exists in our world every man is obliged, if only in part, to deviate from the truth and to make concessions which destroy the force of the powerful weapon which should assist him in the struggle. It is as if a man, who was given a blade so marvelously keen that it would sever anything, should use its edge for driving in nails.

We all complain of the senseless order of life, which is at variance with our being, and yet we refuse to use the unique and powerful weapon within our hands — the consciousness of truth and its expression; but on the contrary, under the pretext of struggling with evil, we destroy the weapon, and sacrifice it to the exigencies of an imaginary conflict.

One man does not assert the truth which he knows, because he feels himself bound to the people with whom he is engaged; another, because the truth might deprive him of the profitable position by which he maintains his family; a third, because he desires to attain reputation and authority, and then use them in the service of mankind; a fourth, because he does not wish to destroy old sacred traditions; a fifth, because he has no desire to offend people; a sixth, because the expression of the truth would arouse persecution, and disturb the excellent social activity to which he has devoted himself.

One serves as emperor, king, minister, government functionary, or soldier, and assures himself and others that the deviation from truth indispensable to his condition is redeemed by the good he does. Another, who fulfils the duties of a spiritual pastor, does not in the depths of his soul believe all he teaches, but permits the devia-

tion from truth in view of the good he does. A third instructs men by means of literature, and notwithstanding the silence he must observe with regard to the whole truth, in order not to stir up the government and society against himself, has no doubt as to the good he does. A fourth struggles resolutely with the existing order as revolutionist or anarchist, and is quite assured that the aims he pursues are so beneficial that the neglect of the truth, or even of the falsehood, by silence, indispensable to the success of his activity, does not destroy the utility of his work.

In order that the conditions of a life contrary to the consciousness of humanity should change and be replaced by one which is in accord with it, the outworn public opinion must be superseded by a new and living one.

And in order that the old outworn opinion should yield its place to the new living one, all who are conscious of the new requirements of existence should openly express them. And yet all those who are conscious of these new requirements, one in the name of one thing, and one in the name of another, not only pass them over in silence, but both by word and deed attest their exact opposites.

Only the truth and its expression can establish that new public opinion which will reform the ancient obsolete and pernicious order of life; and yet we not only do not express the truth we know, but often even distinctly give expression to what we ourselves regard as false.

If only free men would not rely on that which has no power, and is always fettered — upon external aids; but would trust in that which is always powerful and free — the truth and its expression!

If only men were boldly and clearly to express the truth already manifest to them of the brotherhood of all nations, and the crime of exclusive devotion to one's own people, that defunct, false public opinion would slough off of itself like a dried skin, — and upon it depends the power of governments, and all the evil pro-

duced by them; and the new public opinion would stand forth, which is even now but awaiting that dropping off of the old to put forth manifestly and powerfully its demand, and establish new forms of existence in conformity with the consciousness of mankind.

XVIII

It is sufficient that people should understand that what is enunciated to them as public opinion, and maintained by such complex, energetic, and artificial means, is not public opinion, but only the lifeless outcome of what was once public opinion; and, what is more important, it is sufficient that they should have faith in themselves, that they should believe that what they are conscious of in the depths of their souls, what in every one is pressing for expression, and is only not expressed because it contradicts the public opinion supposed to exist, is the power which transforms the world, and to express which is the mission of mankind: it is sufficient to believe that truth is not what men talk of, but what is told by his own conscience, that is, by God, — and at once the whole artificially maintained public opinion will disappear, and a new and true one be established in its place.

If people would only speak what they think, and not what they do not think, all the superstitions emanating from patriotism would at once drop away with the cruel feelings and violence founded upon it. The hatred and animosity between nations and peoples, fanned by their governments, would cease; the extolling of military heroism, that is of murder, would be at an end; and, what is of most importance, respect for authorities, abandonment to them of the fruits of one's labor, and subordination to them, would cease, since there is no other reason for them but patriotism.

And if merely this were to take place, that vast mass of feeble people who are controlled by externals would

sway at once to the side of the new public opinion, which should reign henceforth in place of the old.

Let the government keep the schools, Church, press, its milliards of money and millions of armed men transformed into machines: all this apparently terrible organization of brute force is as nothing compared to the consciousness of truth, which surges in the soul of one man who knows the power of truth, which is communicated from him to a second and a third, as one candle lights an innumerable quantity of others.

The light needs only to be kindled, and, like wax in the face of fire, this organization, which seems so powerful, will melt, and be consumed.

Only let men understand the vast power which is given them in the word which expresses truth; only let them refuse to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage; only let people use their power, — and their rulers will not dare, as now, to threaten men with universal slaughter, to which, at their discretion, they may or may not subject them, nor dare before the eyes of a peaceful populace to hold reviews and manœuvers of disciplined murderers; nor would the governments dare for their own profit and the advantage of their assistants to arrange and derange custom-house agreements, nor to collect from the people those millions of rubles which they distribute among their assistants, and by the help of which their murders are planned.

And such a transformation is not only possible, but it is as impossible that it should not be accomplished as that a lifeless, decaying tree should not fall, and a younger take its place.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," said Christ. And this peace is indeed among us, and depends on us for its attainment.

If only the hearts of individuals would not be troubled by the seductions with which they are hourly seduced, nor afraid of those imaginary terrors by which they are intimidated; if people only knew wherein their chiefest,

all-conquering power consists, — a peace which men have always desired, not the peace attainable by diplomatic negotiations, imperial or kingly progresses, dinners, speeches, fortresses, cannon, dynamite, and melinite, by the exhaustion of the people under taxes, and the abduction from labor of the flower of the population, but the peace attainable by a voluntary profession of the truth by every man, would long ago have been established in our midst.

March 29, 1894.

TWO WARS[1]

CHRISTENDOM has recently been the scene of two wars. One is now concluded, whereas the other still continues; but they were for a time being carried on simultaneously, and the contrast they present is very striking. The first — the Spanish-American war — was an old, vain, foolish, and cruel war, inopportune, out-of-date, barbarous, which sought by killing one set of people to solve the question as to how and by whom another set of people ought to be governed.

The other, which is still going on, and will end only when there is an end of all war, is a new, self-sacrificing, holy war, which was long ago proclaimed (as Victor Hugo expressed it at one of the congresses) by the best and most advanced — Christian — section of mankind against the other, the coarse and savage section. This war has recently been carried on with especial vigor and success by a handful of Christian people — the Dukhobors of the Caucasus — against the powerful Russian government.

The other day I received a letter from a gentleman in Colorado — Jesse Goldwin — who asks me to send him "... a few words or thoughts expressive of my feelings with regard to the noble work of the American nation, and the heroism of its soldiers and sailors." This gentleman, together with an overwhelming majority of the American people, feels perfectly confident that the work of the Americans — the killing of several thousands of almost unarmed men (for, in comparison with the equipment of the Americans, the Spaniards were almost without arms) — was beyond doubt a

[1] From *The Clarion*, November 19, 1898.

"noble work"; and he regards the majority of those who, after killing great numbers of their fellow-creatures, have remained safe and sound, and have secured for themselves an advantageous position, as heroes.

The Spanish-American War — leaving out of account the atrocities committed by the Spaniards in Cuba, which served as a pretext for it — is very like this: An old man, infirm and childish, brought up in the traditions of a false honor, challenges, for the settlement of some misunderstanding, a young man, in full possession of his powers, to a boxing-match. And the young man, who, from his antecedents and professed sentiments, ought to be immeasurably above such a settlement of the question, accepts the challenge. Armed with a club, he then throws himself upon this infirm and childish old man, knocks out his teeth, breaks his ribs, and afterward enthusiastically relates his great deeds to a large audience of young men like himself, who rejoice and praise the hero who has thus maimed the old man.

Such is the nature of the first war, which is occupying the attention of the whole Christian world. Of the other no one speaks; hardly any one knows about it.

This second war may be described as follows: The people of every nation are being deluded by their rulers, who say to them, "You, who are governed by us, are all in danger of being conquered by other nations; we are watching over your welfare and safety, and consequently we demand of you annually some millions of rubles — the fruit of your labor — to be used by us in the acquisition of arms, cannon, powder, and ships for your defence; we also demand that you yourselves shall enter institutions, organized by us, where you will become senseless particles of a huge machine — the army — which will be under our absolute control. On entering this army you will cease to be men with wills of your own; you will simply do what we require of you. But what we wish, above all else, is to exercise dominion; the means by which we dominate is killing, therefore we will instruct you to kill."

Notwithstanding the obvious absurdity of the assertion that people are in danger of being attacked by the governments of other states, who, in their turn, affirm that they — in spite of all their desire for peace — find themselves in precisely the same danger; notwithstanding the humiliation of that slavery to which men subject themselves by entering the army; notwithstanding the cruelty of the work to which they are summoned, — men nevertheless submit to this fraud, give their money to be used for their own subjugation, and themselves help to enslave others.

But now there come people who say: "What you tell us about the danger threatening us, and about your anxiety to guard us against it, is a fraud. All the states are assuring us that they desire peace, and yet at the same time all are arming themselves against the others. Moreover, according to that law, which you yourselves recognize, all men are brothers, and it makes no difference whether one belongs to this state or to that; therefore the idea of our being attacked by other nations, with which you try to frighten us, has no terrors for us; we regard it as a matter of no importance. The essential thing, however, is that the law given to us by God and recognized even by you who are requiring us to participate in killing, distinctly forbids, not killing only, but also every kind of violence. Therefore we cannot, and will not, take part in your preparations for murder, we will give no money for the purpose, and we will not attend the meetings arranged by you with the object of perverting men's minds and consciences, and transforming them into instruments of violence, obedient to any bad man who may choose to make use of them."

This constitutes the second war. It has long been carried on by the best men of the world against the representatives of brute force, and has of late flamed up with special intensity between the Dukhobors and the Russian government. The Russian government has made use of all the weapons it had at command — police measures for making arrests, for prohibiting

people moving from place to place, for forbidding all intercourse with one another, the interception of letters, espionage, the prohibition to publish in the newspapers information about anything concerning the Dukhobors, calumnies of them printed in the papers, bribery, flogging, imprisonment, and the ruin of families.

The Dukhobors have, on their part, employed their one religious weapon, viz., gentle intelligence and patient firmness; and they say: "One must not obey man rather than God. Therefore, whatever you may do to us, we cannot and will not obey you."

Men praise the heroes of the savage Spanish-American war, who, in their desire to distinguish themselves before the world, and to gain reward and fame, have slain great numbers of men, or have died while engaged in killing their fellow-creatures. But no one speaks or even knows about the heroes of the war against war, who — unseen and unheard — have died and are now dying under the rod, in foul prison cells or in painful exile, and who, nevertheless, to their last breath, stand firm by goodness and truth.

I knew dozens of these martyrs who have already died, and hundreds more who, scattered all over the world, are still suffering martyrdom for the truth.

I knew Drozhin, a peasant teacher, who was tortured to death in a penal battalion; I knew another, Izumtchenko (a friend of Drozhin), who, after being kept for some time in a penal battalion, was banished to the other end of the world. I knew Olkhovikof, a peasant who refused military service, and was consequently sent to a penal battalion, and then, while on board a steamer which was transporting him into exile, converted Sereda, the soldier who had him in charge. Sereda, understanding what Olkhovikof said to him as to the sinfulness of military service, went to his superiors and said, like the ancient martyrs; "I do not wish to be among the torturers; let me join the martyrs." And forthwith they began to torture him, sent him to a penal battalion, and afterwards exiled him to the prov-

ince of Yakutsk. I knew dozens of Dukhobors, of whom many have died or become blind, and yet they would not yield to demands which are contrary to the divine law.

The other day I read a letter from a young Dukhobor, who has been sent alone to a regiment stationed in Samarkand. Again, those same demands on the part of the officers, the same persuasion from the chaplain, the same threats and entreaties, and always the same simple and irresistible replies: "I cannot do what is opposed to my belief in God."

"Then we will torture you to death."

"That is your business. You do your work and I will do mine."

And this youth of twenty, forsaken of all, in a strange place, surrounded by men who are hostile to him, amid the rich, the powerful, and the educated, who are concentrating all their energies on the task of bringing him to subjection, does not submit, but still perseveres in his heroic deed.

But men say: "These are useless victims; these people perish, but the order of life will remain the same." This, I believe, is just what was said with regard to the sacrifice of Christ, as well as of all the other martyrs to truth. The men of our time, especially the learned, have grown so coarse that they, owing to their coarseness, are even unable to understand the significance and effect of spiritual force. A shell with 250 puds of dynamite, fired at a crowd of living men — this they understand and recognize as a force; but thought, truth, which has been realized and practised in the life, even to martyrdom, which has now become accessible to millions — this, according to their conception, is not a force, because it makes no noise, and one cannot see broken bones and pools of blood. Learned men (true, it is those whose learning is misdirected) are using all the power of erudition to prove that mankind lives like a herd of cattle, that man is guided by economic considerations alone, and that his intellect is given him merely for amusement. But governments well

know what it is that rules the world, consequently — guided by the instinct of self-preservation — they are undoubtedly chiefly concerned about the manifestation of spiritual forces, upon which forces depend their existence or their ruin.

And this is precisely the reason why all the energies of the Russian government were, and still continue to be, exerted to render the Dukhobors harmless, to isolate them, to banish them beyond the frontier.

Notwithstanding all these efforts, however, the struggle of the Dukhobors has opened the eyes of millions.

I know hundreds of military men, old and young, who, owing to the persecution of the gentle, industrious Dukhobors, have begun to have doubts as to the legality of their occupation. I know people who have, for the first time, begun to meditate on life and the meaning of Christianity only after seeing or hearing about the life of these people, and the persecutions to which they have been subjected.

And the government that is tyrannizing over millions of people knows this, and feels that it has been struck to the very heart.

Such is the nature of the second war which is being waged in our times, and such are its consequences. And not to the Russian government alone are these consequences of importance; every government founded upon violence and upheld by armies is wounded in the same way by this weapon. Christ said, "*I have conquered the world.*" And, indeed, He has conquered the world, if men would but learn to believe in the strength of the weapon given by Him.

And this weapon is the obedience of every man to his own reason and conscience. This, indeed, is so simple, so indubitable, and binding upon every man. "You wish to make me a participator in murder; you demand of me money for the preparation of weapons; and want me to take part in the organized assembly of murderers," says the reasonable man — he who has neither sold nor obscured his conscience. "But I

profess that law — the same that is also professed by you — which long ago forbade not murder only, but all hostility also, and therefore I cannot obey you."

And it is just by this simple means, and by it alone, that the world is being conquered.

November, 1898.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

DURING last year, in Holland, a young man named Van der Veer was called on to enter the National Guard. To the summons of the commander, Van der Veer answered in the following letter: —

"Thou Shalt do no Murder."

To M. Herman Sneiders, *Commandant of the National Guard of the Midelburg district.*

Dear Sir, — Last week I received a document ordering me to appear at the municipal office, to be, according to law, enlisted in the National Guard. As you probably noticed, I did not appear, and this letter is to inform you, plainly and without equivocation, that I do not intend to appear before the commission. I know well that I am taking a heavy responsibility, that you have the right to punish me, and that you will not fail to use this right. But that does not frighten me. The reasons which lead me to this passive resistance seem to me strong enough to outweigh the responsibility I take.

I, who, if you please, am not a Christian, understand better than most Christians the commandment which is put at the head of this letter, the commandment which is rooted in human nature, in the mind of man. When but a boy, I allowed myself to be taught the trade of soldier, the art of killing; but now I renounce it. I would not kill at the command of others, and thus have murder on my conscience without any personal cause or reason whatever.

Can you mention anything more degrading to a human being than carrying out such murder, such massacre? I am unable to kill, even to see an animal killed; therefore I became a vegetarian. And now I am to be ordered to shoot

men who have done me no harm; for I take it that it is not to shoot at leaves and branches of trees that soldiers are taught to use guns.

But you will reply, perhaps, that the National Guard is besides, and especially, to keep civic order.

M. Commandant, if order really reigned in our society, if the social organism were really healthy — in other words, if there were in our social relations no crying abuses, if it were not established that one man shall die of hunger while another gratifies his every whim of luxury, then you would see me in the front ranks of the defenders of this orderly state. But I flatly decline to help in preserving the present so-called "social order." Why, M. Commandant, should we throw dust in each other's eyes? We both know quite well what the "preservation of order" means: upholding the rich against the poor toilers, who begin to perceive their rights. Do we not know the rôle which the National Guard played in the last strike at Rotterdam? For no reason, the Guard had to be on duty hours and hours to watch over the property of the commercial houses which were affected. Can you for a moment suppose that I should shoot down working-people who are acting quite within their rights? You cannot be so blind. Why then complicate the question? Certainly, it is impossible for me to allow myself to be molded into an obedient National Guardsman such as you want and must have.

For all these reasons, but especially because I hate murder by order, I refuse to serve as a National Guardsman, and ask you not to send me either uniform or arms, because I have a fixed resolve not to use them. — I greet you, M. Commandant,

J. K. Van der Veer.

This letter, in my opinion, has great importance. Refusals of military service in Christian states began when in Christian states military service appeared. Or rather when the states, the power of which rests upon violence, laid claim to Christianity without giving up violence. In truth, it cannot be otherwise. A Christian, whose doctrine enjoins upon him humility, non-resistance to evil, love to all (even to the most malicious), cannot be a soldier; that is, he cannot join a class of men whose business is to kill their fellow-men. Therefore

it is that these Christians have always refused and now refuse military service.

But of true Christians there have always been but few. Most people in Christian countries count as Christians only those who profess the doctrines of some Church, which doctrines have nothing in common, except the name, with true Christianity. That occasionally one in tens of thousands of recruits should refuse to serve did not trouble the hundreds of thousands, the millions, of men who every year accepted military service.

Impossible that the whole enormous majority of Christians who enter upon military service are wrong, and only the exceptions, sometimes uneducated people, are right; while every archbishop and man of learning thinks the service compatible with Christianity. So think the majority, and, untroubled regarding themselves as Christians, they enter the rank of murderers. But now appears a man who, as he himself says, is not a Christian, and who refuses military service, not from religious motives, but from motives of the simplest kind, motives intelligible and common to all men, of whatever religion or nation, whether Catholic, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Confucian, whether Spaniards or Japanese.

Van der Veer refuses military service, not because he follows the commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder," not because he is a Christian, but because he holds murder to be opposed to human nature. He writes that he simply abhors all killing, and abhors it to such a degree that he becomes a vegetarian just to avoid participation in the killing of animals; and, above all, he says, he refuses military service because he thinks "murder by order," that is, the obligation to kill those whom one is ordered to kill (which is the real nature of military service), is incompatible with man's uprightness.

Alluding to the usual objection that if he refuses others will follow his example, and the present social order will be destroyed, he answers that he does not wish to preserve the present social order, because it is bad, because in it the rich dominate the poor, which

ought not to be. So that, even if he had any other doubt as to the propriety of serving or not serving, the one consideration that in serving as a soldier he must, by carrying arms and threatening to kill, support the oppressing rich against the oppressed poor, would compel him to refuse military service.

If Van der Veer were to give as the reason for his refusal his adherence to the Christian religion, those who now join the military service could say, "We are no sectarians, and do not acknowledge Christianity; therefore we do not see the need to act as you do."

But the reasons given by Van der Veer are so simple, clear, and universal that it is impossible not to apply them each to his own case. As things are, to deny the force of these reasons in one's own case, one must say: —

"I like killing, and am ready to kill, not only evil-disposed people, but my own oppressed and unfortunate fellow-countrymen, and I perceive nothing wrong in the promise to kill, at the order of the first officer who comes across me, whomever he bids me kill."

Here is a young man. In whatever surroundings, family, creed, he has been brought up, he has been taught that he must be good, that it is bad to strike and kill, not only men, but even animals; he has been taught that a man must value his uprightness, which uprightness consists in acting according to conscience. This is equally taught to the Confucian in China, the Shintoist in Japan, the Buddhist, and the Mohammedan. Suddenly, after being taught all this, he enters the military service, where he is required to do the precise opposite of what he has been taught. He is told to fit himself for wounding and killing, not animals, but men; he is told to renounce his independence as a man, and obey, in the business of murder, men whom he does not know, utter strangers to him.

To such a command, what right answer can a man of our day make? Surely, only this, "I do not wish to, and I will not."

Exactly this answer Van der Veer gives. And it is

hard to invent any reply to him and to those who, in a similar position, do as he does.

One may not see this point, through attention not having been called to it; one may not understand the import of an action, as long as it remains unexplained. But once pointed out and explained, one can no longer fail to see, or feign blindness to what is quite obvious.

There may still be found men who do not reflect upon their action in entering military service, and men who want war with foreign people, and men who would continue the oppression of the laboring class, and even men who like murder for murder's sake. Such men can continue as soldiers; but even they cannot now fail to know that there are others, the best men in the world, — not only among Christians, but among Mohammedans, Brahmanists, Buddhists, Confucians, — who look upon war and soldiers with aversion and contempt, and whose number grows hourly. No arguments can talk away this plain fact, that a man with any sense of his own dignity cannot enslave himself to an unknown, or even a known, master whose business is killing. Now just in this consists military service, with all its compulsion of discipline.

"But consider the consequences to him who refuses," I am told. "It is all very well for you, an old man exempted from this exaction, and safe by your position, to preach martyrdom; but what about those to whom you preach, and who, believing in you, refuse to serve, and ruin their young lives?"

"But what can I do?" — I answer those who speak thus. — "Because I am old, must I therefore not point out the evil which I clearly, unquestionably see, seeing it precisely because I am old and have lived and thought for long? Must a man who stands on the far side of the river, beyond the reach of that ruffian whom he sees compelling one man to murder another, not cry out to the slayer, bidding him to refrain, for the reason that such interference will still more enrage the ruffian? Moreover, I by no means see why the government, persecuting those who refuse military service, does not

turn its punishment upon me, recognizing in me an instigator. I am not too old for persecution, for any and all sorts of punishments, and my position is a defenseless one. At all events, whether blamed and persecuted or not, whether those who refuse military service are persecuted or not, I, whilst I live, will not cease from saying what I now say; for I cannot refrain from acting according to my conscience." Just in this very thing is Christian truth powerful, irresistible; namely, that, being the teaching of truth, in affecting men it is not to be governed by outside considerations. Whether young or old, whether persecuted or not, he who adopts the Christian, the true, conception of life, cannot shrink from the claims of his conscience. In this is the essence and peculiarity of Christianity, distinguishing it from all other religious teachings; and in this is its unconquerable power.

Van der Veer says he is not a Christian. But the motives of his refusal and action are Christian. He refuses because he does not wish to kill a brother man; he does not obey, because the commands of his conscience are more binding upon him than the commands of men. Precisely on this account is Van der Veer's refusal so important. Thereby he shows that Christianity is not a sect or creed which some may profess and others reject; but that it is naught else than a life's following of that light of reason which illumines all men. The merit of Christianity is not that it prescribes to men such and such acts, but that it foresees and points out the way by which all mankind must go and does go.

Those men who now behave rightly and reasonably do so, not because they follow prescriptions of Christ, but because that line of action which was pointed out eighteen hundred years ago has now become identified with human conscience.

This is why I think the action and letter of Van der Veer are of great import.

As a fire lit on a prairie or in a forest will not die out until it has burned all that is dry and dead, and

therefore combustible, so the truth, once articulated in human utterance, will not cease its work until all falsehood, appointed for destruction, surrounding and hiding the truth on all sides as it does, is destroyed. The fire smolders long; but as soon as it flashes into flame, all that can burn burns quickly.

So with the truth, which takes long to reach a right expression, but once that clear expression in word is given, falsehood and wrong are soon to be destroyed. One of the partial manifestations of Christianity, — the idea that men can live without the institution of slavery, — although it had been included in the Christian concept, was clearly expressed, so it seems to me, only by writers at the end of the eighteenth century. Up to that time, not only the ancient pagans, as Plato and Aristotle, but even men near to us in time, and Christians, could not imagine a human society without slavery. Thomas More could not imagine even a Utopia without slavery. So also men of the beginning of this century could not imagine the life of man without war. Only after the Napoleonic wars was the idea clearly expressed that man can live without war. And now a hundred years have gone since the first clear expression of the idea that mankind can live without slavery; and there is no longer slavery in Christian nations. And there shall not pass away another hundred years after the clear utterance of the idea that mankind can live without war, before war shall cease to be. Very likely some form of armed violence will remain, just as wage-labor remains after the abolition of slavery; but, at least, wars and armies will be abolished in the outrageous form, so repugnant to reason and moral sense, in which they now exist.

Signs that this time is near are many. These signs are such as the helpless position of governments, which more and more increase their armaments; the multiplication of taxation and the discontent of the nations; the extreme degree of efficiency with which deadly weapons are constructed; the activity of congresses and societies of peace; but above all, the refusals of

individuals to take military service. In these refusals is the key to the solution of the question. You say that military service is necessary; that, without soldiers, disasters will happen to us. That may be; but, holding the idea of right and wrong which is universal among men to-day, yourselves included, I cannot kill men to order. So that if, as you say, military service is essential — then arrange it in some way not so contradictory to my, and your, conscience. But, until you have so arranged it, do not claim from me what is against my conscience, which I can by no means disobey.

Thus, inevitably, and very soon, must answer all honest and reasonable men; not only the men of Christendom, but even Mohammedans and the so-called heathen, the Brahmanists, Buddhists, and Confucians. Maybe, by the power of inertia, the soldiering trade will go on for some time to come; but even now the question stands solved in the human conscience, and with every day, every hour, more and more men come to the same solution; and to stay the movement is, at this juncture, not possible. Every recognition of a truth by man, or rather, every deliverance from an error, as in the case of slavery before our eyes, is always attained through a conflict between the awakening conscience and the inertia of the old condition.

At first the inertia is so powerful, the conscience so weak, that the first attempt to escape from error is met only with astonishment. The new truth seems madness. Is it proposed to live without slavery? Then who will work? Is it proposed to live without fighting? Then everybody will come and conquer us.

But the power of conscience grows, inertia weakens, and astonishment is changing to sneers and contempt. "The Holy Scriptures acknowledge masters and slaves. These relations have always been, and now come these wiseacres who want to change the whole world;" so men spoke concerning slavery. "All the scientists and philosophers recognize the lawfulness, and even sacredness, of war; and are we immediately to believe that there is no need of war?"

So men speak concerning war. But conscience continues to grow and to become clear; the number increases of those who recognize the new truth, and sneer and contempt give place to subterfuge and trickery. Those who support the error make slow to understand and admit the incongruity and cruelty of the practice they defend, but think its abolition impossible just now, so delaying its abolition indefinitely. "Who does not know that slavery is an evil? But men are not yet ripe for freedom, and liberation will produce horrible disasters" — men used to say concerning slavery, forty years ago. "Who does not know that war is an evil? But while mankind is still so bestial, abolition of armies will do more harm than good," men say concerning war to-day.

Nevertheless, the idea is doing its work; it grows, it burns the falsehood; and the time has come when the madness, the uselessness, the harmfulness, and wickedness of the error are so clear (as it happened in the sixties with slavery in Russia and America) that even now it is impossible to justify it. Such is the present position as to war. Just as, in the sixties, no attempts were made to justify slavery, but only to maintain it; so to-day no man attempts any longer to justify war and armies, but only tries, in silence, to use the inertia which still supports them, knowing very well that this cruel and immoral organization for murder, which seems so powerful, may at any moment crumble down, never more to be raised.

Once a drop of water oozes through the dam, once a brick falls out from a great building, once a mesh comes loose in the strongest net — the dam bursts, the building falls, the net unweaves. Such a drop, such a brick, such a loosed mesh, it seems to me, is the refusal of Van der Veer, explained by reasons universal to all mankind.

Upon this refusal of Van der Veer like refusals must follow more and more often. As soon as these become numerous, the very men (their name is legion) who the day before said, "It is impossible to live without war,"

will say at once that they have this long time declared the madness and immorality of war, and they will advise everybody to follow Van der Veer's example. Then, of wars and armies, as these are now, there will remain only the recollection.

And this time is coming.

January 6, 1897.

CARTHAGO DELENDA EST[1]

La Vita internationale and *L'Humanité nouvelle* have sent me the following letter: —

"Sir, — With the object of furthering the development of humanitarian ideas and civilization, *La Vita internationale* (of Milan), with the support of *L'Humanité nouvelle* (of Paris and Brussels), has deemed it necessary to concern itself with the difficult problem which has of late arisen in all its gravity and importance, owing to the delicate question about which France and the whole world has become so ardently impassioned, — we mean the problem of war and militarism. With this aim in view, we beg all those in Europe that take part in politics, science, art, and the labor movement, and even those that occupy the foremost positions in the army, to contribute to this most civilizing task by replying to the following questions: —

"1. Is war among civilized nations still required by history, law, and progress?

"2. What are the intellectual, moral, physical, economical, and political effects of militarism?

"3. What, in the interests of the world's future civilization, are the solutions which should be given to the grave problems of war and militarism?

"4. What means would most rapidly lead to these solutions?"

I cannot conceal the feelings of disgust, indignation, and even despair which were aroused in me by this letter. Enlightened, sensible, good Christian people, who inculcate the principle of love and brotherhood, who regard murder as an awful crime, who, with very few

[1] First printed in *The Westminster Gazette*.

exceptions, are unable to kill an animal, — all these people suddenly, provided that these crimes are called war, not only acknowledge the destruction, plunder, and killing of people to be right and legal, but themselves contribute toward these robberies and murders, prepare themselves for them, take part in them, are proud of them.

Moreover, always and everywhere one and the same phenomenon repeats itself, *viz.*, that the great majority of people — all working-people — those same people who carry out the robberies and murders, and on whom the burden falls — neither devise, nor prepare, nor desire these things, but take part in them against their will, merely because they are placed in such a position and are so instigated that it appears to them, to each individual, that they would suffer more were they to refuse. Whereas those who devise and prepare for these plunders and murders, and who compel the working-people to carry them out, are but an insignificant minority, who live in luxury and idleness, upon the labor of the workers.

This deceit has already been going on for a long time, but lately the insolence of the impostors has reached its extremest development, and a great share of what labor produces is being taken away from the workers, and used for making preparations for plundering and killing. In all the constitutional countries of Europe the workers themselves — all, without exception — are called upon to take part in these robberies and murders; international relations are purposely always more and more complicated, and this leads on to war; peaceful countries are being plundered without the least cause; every year, in some place or other, people murder and rob; and all live in constant dread of general mutual robbery and murder.

It seems evident that, if these things are done, it can only be because the great mass of people are deceived by the minority to whom this deceit is advantageous, and therefore that the first task of those who are anxious to free people from the evils caused by this

mutual murdering and plundering should be to expose the deception under which the masses are laboring; to point out to them how the deceit is perpetrated, by what means it is being upheld, and how to get rid of it.

The enlightened people of Europe, however, do nothing of the kind, but, under the pretext of furthering the establishment of peace, they assemble now in one, now in another city of Europe, and, seated at tables, with most serious faces, they discuss the question how best to persuade those brigands who live by their plunder to give up robbing, and become peaceful citizens; and then they put the profound questions: first, whether war is still desirable from the standpoint of history, law, and progress (as if such fictions, invented by us, could demand from us deviation from the fundamental moral law of our life); secondly, as to what are the consequences of war (as if there could be any doubt that the consequences of war are always general distress and corruption); and finally, as to how to solve the problem of war (as if it were a difficult problem how to free deluded people from a delusion which we clearly see).

This is terrible! We see, for instance, how healthy, calm, and frequently happy people year after year arrive at some gambling-den like Monte Carlo, and, benefiting no one but the keepers of those dens, leave there their health, peace, honor, and often their lives. We pity these people; we see clearly that the deceit to which they are subjected consists in those temptations whereby gamblers are allured, in the inequality of the chances, and in the infatuation of gamblers who, though fully aware that in general they are sure to be losers, nevertheless hope for once at least to be more fortunate than the rest. All this is perfectly clear.

And then, in order to free people from these miseries, we — instead of pointing out to them the temptations to which they are subjected, the fact that they are sure to lose, and the immorality of gambling, which is based on the expectation of other people's misfortunes — assemble with grave faces at meetings, and discuss how to arrange that the keepers of gambling-houses

should of their own accord shut up their establishments; we write books about it, and we put questions to ourselves as to whether history, law, and progress require the existence of gambling-houses, and as to what are the economical, intellectual, moral, and other consequences of roulette.

If a man is given to drink, and I tell him that he himself can leave off drinking and that he must do so, there is a hope that he will listen to me; but if I tell him that his drunkenness is a complicated and difficult problem which we learned men are trying to solve at our meetings, then in all probability he will, while awaiting the solution of this problem, continue to drink.

Thus also with these false and refined external, scientific means of abolishing war, such as international tribunals, arbitration, and similar absurdities with which we occupy ourselves, while all the time carefully omitting to mention the most simple, essential, and self-evident method of causing war to cease — a method plain for all to see.

In order that people who do not want war should not fight, it is not necessary to have either international law, arbitration, international tribunals, or solutions of problems; but it is merely necessary that those who are subjected to the deceit should awake and free themselves from the spell or enchantment under which they find themselves. The way to do away with war is for those who do not want war, who regard participation in it as a sin, to refrain from fighting. This method has been preached from the earliest times by Christian writers such as Tertullian and Origen, as well as by the Paulicians, and by their successors, the Mennonites, Quakers, and Herrnhuters. The sin, harmfulness, and senselessness of military service have been written about and exposed in every way by Dymond, Garrison, and, twenty years ago, by Ballou, as well as by myself. The method I have mentioned has been adopted in the past, and of late has been frequently resorted to by isolated individuals in Austria, Prussia, Holland, Switzerland, and Russia, as well as by whole

societies like the Quakers, Mennonites, and Nazarenes, and recently by the Dukhobors, of whom a whole population of fifteen thousand are now for the third year resisting the powerful Russian government, and, notwithstanding all the sufferings to which they have been subjected, do not submit to its demands that they should take part in the crimes of military service.

But the enlightened friends of peace not only refrain from recommending this method, but cannot bear the mention of it; when it is brought before them they pretend not to have noticed it, or, if they cannot help noticing it, they gravely shrug their shoulders and express their pity for those uneducated and unreasonable men who adopt such an ineffectual, silly method, when such a good one exists,— namely, to sprinkle salt on the bird one wishes to catch, *i.e.* to persuade the governments, who only exist by violence and deceit, to forsake both the one and the other.

They tell us that the misunderstandings which arise between governments will be settled by tribunals or arbitration. But the governments do not at all desire the settlement of misunderstandings. On the contrary, if there be none they invent some, it being only by such misunderstanding with the governments that they are afforded a pretext for keeping up the army upon which their power is based. Thus the enlightened friends of peace strive to divert the attention of the working, suffering masses from the only method that can deliver them from the slavery in which they are held (from their youth upward), first by patriotism, next by oaths administered by the mercenary priests of a perverted Christianity, and lastly, by the fear of punishment.

In our days of close and peaceful relations between peoples of different nationalities and countries, the deceit called patriotism (which always claims the preeminence of one state or nationality over the rest, and which is therefore always involving people in useless and pernicious wars) is too evident for reasonable people of our age not to free themselves from it; and the religious deceit of the obligation of the oath (which

is distinctly forbidden by that very gospel which the governments profess) is, thank God, ever less and less believed in. So that what really prevents the great majority from refusing to take part in military service is merely fear of the punishments which are inflicted by the governments for such refusals. This fear, however, is only a result of the government deceit, and has no other basis than hypnotism.

The governments may and should fear those who refuse to serve, and, indeed, they are afraid of them because every refusal undermines the prestige of the deceit by which the governments have the people in their power. But those who refuse have no ground whatever to fear a government that demands crimes from them. In refusing military service every man risks much less than he would were he to enter it.

The refusal of military service and the punishment — imprisonment, exile — is only an advantageous insurance of oneself against the dangers of the military service. In entering the service every man risks having to take part in war (for which he is being prepared), and during war he may be like a man sentenced to death, placed in a position in which under the most difficult and painful circumstances he will almost certainly be killed or crippled, as I have seen in Sevastopol, where a regiment marched to a fort where two regiments had already been destroyed, and stood there until it too was entirely exterminated. Another, more profitable, chance is that the man who enters the army will not be killed, but will only fall ill and die in the unhealthy conditions of military service. A third chance is that, having been insulted by his superior, he will be unable to contain himself, will answer sharply, will break the discipline, and will be subjected to punishment much worse than that to which he would have been liable had he refused military service.

The best chance, however, is that instead of the imprisonment or exile to which a person refusing military service is liable, he will pass three or five years of his life amid vicious surroundings, practising the art of killing, being

all the while in the same captivity as in prison, and in humiliating submission to depraved people. This in the first place.

Secondly, in refusing military service, every man, however strange it may seem, can yet always hope to escape punishment — upon his refusal being that last exposure of the governments' deceit which will render any further punishment for such a deed, the punishment of one who refuses to participate in their oppression, impossible. So that submission to the demands of military service is evidently only submission to the hypnotization of the masses — the utterly futile rush of Panurge's sheep into the water, to their evident destruction.

Moreover, besides the consideration of advantage, there is yet another reason which should impel every man to refuse military service who is not hypnotized and is conscious of the importance of his actions. No one can help desiring that his life should not be an aimless and useless existence, but that it should be of service to God and man; yet frequently a man spends his life without finding an opportunity for such service. The summons to accept the military service presents precisely such an opportunity to every man of our time.

Every man, in refusing to take part in military service or to pay taxes to a government which uses them for military purposes, is, by this refusal, rendering a great service to God and man, for he is thereby making use of the most efficacious means of furthering the progressive movement of mankind toward that better social order which it is striving after and must eventually attain. But not only is it advantageous to refuse the participation in the military service, and not only should the majority of the men of our time so refuse; it is, moreover, *impossible* not to refuse, if only they are not hypnotized. To every man there are some actions which are morally impossible — as impossible as are certain physical actions. And the promise of slavish obedience to strangers, and to immoral people who have the murder of men as their acknowledged object, is, to

the majority of men, if only they be free from hypnotism, just such a morally impossible action. And therefore it is not only advantageous to and obligatory on every man to refuse to participate in the military service, but it is also impossible for him not to do so if only he be free from the stupefaction of hypnotism.

"But what will happen when all people refuse military service, and there is no check nor hold over the wicked, and the wicked triumph, and there is no protection against savage people — against the yellow race — who will come and conquer us?"

I will say nothing about the fact that, as it is, the wicked have long been triumphing, that they are still triumphing, and that while fighting one another they have long dominated the Christians, so that there is no need to fear what has already been accomplished; nor will I say anything with regard to the dread of the savage yellow race, whom we persistently provoke and instruct in war, — that being a mere excuse, and one-hundredth part of the army now kept up in Europe being sufficient for the imaginary protection against them, — I will say nothing about all this, because the consideration of the general result to the world of such or such actions cannot serve as a guide for our conduct and activity.

To man is given another guide, and that an unfailing one, — the guide of his conscience, following which he indubitably knows that he is doing what he should do. Therefore, all considerations of the danger that threatens every individual who refuses military service, as well as what menaces the world in consequence of such refusals — all these are but a particle of that enormous and monstrous deceit in which Christian mankind is enmeshed, and which is being carefully maintained by the governments who exist by the power of this deceit.

If man act in accordance with what is dictated to him by his reason, his conscience, and his God, only the very best can result for himself as well as for the world.

People complain of the evil conditions of life in our Christian world. But is it possible for it to be otherwise,

when all of us acknowledge not only that fundamental divine law proclaimed some thousands of years ago, "Thou shalt not kill," but also the law of love and brotherhood of all men, and yet, notwithstanding this, every man in the European world practically disavows this fundamental divine law acknowledged by him, and at the command of president, emperor, or minister, of Nicholas or William, arrays himself in a ridiculous costume, takes an instrument of murder and says, "Here I am, ready to injure, ruin, or kill any one I am ordered to"?

What must a society be like which is composed of such men? Such a society must be dreadful, and indeed it is so!

Awake, brethren! Listen neither to those villains who, from your childhood, infect you with the diabolic spirit of patriotism, opposed to righteousness and truth, and only necessary in order to deprive you of your property, your freedom, and your human dignity; nor to those ancient impostors who preach war in the name of a cruel and vindictive God invented by them, and in the name of a perverted and false Christianity; nor, even less, to those modern Sadducees who, in the name of science and civilization, aiming only at the continuation of the present state of things, assemble at meetings, write books, and make speeches, promising to organize a good and peaceful life for people without their making any effort! Do not believe them. Believe only the consciousness which tells you that you are neither beasts nor slaves, but free men, responsible for your actions, and therefore unable to be murderers either of your own accord or at the will of those who live by these murders.

And it is only necessary for you to awake in order to realize all the horror and insanity of that which you have been and are doing, and, having realized this, to cease that evil which you yourselves abhor, and which is ruining you. If only you were to refrain from the evil which you yourselves detest, those ruling impostors, who first corrupt and then oppress you, would disappear like owls before the daylight, and then those new,

human, brotherly conditions of life would be established for which Christendom — weary of suffering, exhausted by deceit, and lost in insolvable contradictions — is longing. Only let every man without any intricate or sophisticated arguments accomplish that which to-day his conscience unfailingly bids him do, and he will recognize the truth of the Gospel words: —

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."[1]

[1] John vii. 17.

1899.

SHAME!

THERE was a time between 1820 and 1830 when the officers of the Semenof regiment — the flower of the youth at that time; men who were for the most part Freemasons, and subsequently Decembrists[1] — decided not to use corporal punishment in their regiment, and, notwithstanding the stringent discipline then required, theirs continued to be a model regiment without corporal punishment.

The officer in charge of one of the companies of this same Semenof regiment, meeting Serge Ivanovitch Muravief — one of the best men of his, or indeed of any, time, — spoke of a certain soldier, a thief and a drunkard, saying that such a man can only be tamed with rods. Serge Muravief did not agree with him, and proposed to transfer the man into his own company.

The transfer was made, and almost the next day the soldier stole a comrade's boots, sold them for drink, and made a disturbance. Serge Ivanovitch mustered the company, called out the soldier, and said to him: "You know that in my company we neither strike men nor flog them, and I am not going to punish you. I shall pay, with my own money, for the boots you stole; but I ask you, not for my sake, but for your own, to think over your way of life, and to amend it." And after giving the man some friendly counsel, Serge Ivanovitch let him go.

The man again got drunk and fought, and again he was not punished, but only exhorted: —

[1] Members of the party which attempted, but failed, to secure by force a liberal constitution for Russia at the time Nicholas I. ascended the throne. — TR.

"You are doing yourself great harm. If you will amend, you yourself will be the better for it. Therefore I ask you not to do these things any more."

The man was so struck by this new kind of treatment that he completely altered, and became a model soldier.

This incident was related to me by Serge Ivanovitch's brother, Matthew Ivanovitch, who, like his brother, and all the best men of his day, considered corporal punishment a shameful relic of barbarism, disgraceful to those who inflict it, rather than to those who endure it. When telling this story he could never refrain from tears of emotion and delight. And, indeed, for those who heard him tell it, it was hard not to follow his example.

That is how educated Russians, seventy-five years ago, regarded corporal punishment. And in our day, seventy-five years having gone by, the grandsons of these men take their places as magistrates at sessions, and calmly discuss whether such and such a full-grown man (often the father of a family, or sometimes even a grandfather) should or should not be flogged, and how many strokes of the rod he ought to have.

The most advanced of these grandsons, meeting in committees and local government councils, draw up declarations, addresses, and petitions, to the effect that, on certain hygienic or pedagogic grounds,[1] it would be better not to flog all the muzhiks (people of the peasant class), but only those who have not passed all the classes of the national schools.

Evidently a great change has occurred in what we call the educated upper classes. The men of the twenties, considering the infliction of corporal punishment to be disgraceful to themselves, were able to get rid of it even in the military service where it was deemed indispensable; but the men of our day calmly apply it, not to sol-

[1] By petitioning, openly, for the repeal of such laws as that which empowers the local magistrates to have peasants flogged, the petitioners would risk being looked at askance by those in power, and might easily lose any places they held under government. But as members of local health committees, or of committees to promote education, it is sometimes possible for people (while appearing anxious only to further the special cause intrusted to them) to utter veiled protests with a minimum amount of risk. — Tr.

diers only, but to any man of one special class of Russian people, and cautiously, diplomatically, in their committees and assemblies, draw up addresses and petitions to the government, with all sorts of reservations and circumlocutions, saying that there are hygienic objections to punishment by flogging, and therefore its use should be limited; or that it would be desirable only to flog those peasants who have not gone through a certain school course; or not to flog peasants referred to in the manifesto issued on the occasion of the Tsar's marriage.

Evidently a terrible change has taken place among the so-called upper classes of Russian society. And what is most astonishing is, that it has come about just while, — in the very class which it is considered necessary to expose to this revolting, coarse, and stupid torture by flogging, — during these same seventy-five years, and especially during the last thirty-five years (since the emancipation of the serfs), an equally important change has taken place in the contrary direction.

While the upper, governing classes have sunk to a plane so coarse and morally degraded that they have legalized flogging, and can calmly discuss it, the mental and moral plane of the peasant class has so risen, that corporal punishment has become for them, not only a physical, but also a moral torture.

I have heard and read of cases of suicide committed by peasants sentenced to be flogged, and I cannot doubt that such cases occur, for I have myself seen a most ordinary young peasant turn white as a sheet, and lose control of his voice, at the mere mention, in the District Court, of the possibility of it being inflicted on him. I have seen how another peasant, forty years old, who had been condemned to corporal punishment, wept, when — in reply to my inquiry whether the sentence had been executed — he had to reply that it had been.

I know, too, the case of a respected, elderly peasant of my acquaintance, who was sentenced to flogging because he had quarreled with the starosta, not noticing that the starosta was wearing his badge of office. The man was brought to the District Court, and from there

to the shed in which the punishment is usually inflicted. The watchman came with the rods, and the peasant was told to strip.

"Parmen Ermil'itch, you know I have a married son," said the peasant, addressing the starshina, or elder, and trembling all over. "Can't this be avoided? You know it's a sin."

"It's the authorities, Petrovitch; I should be glad enough myself, — but there's no help for it," replied the elder, abashed.

Petrovitch undressed and lay down.

"Christ suffered and told us to," said he.

The clerk, an eye-witness, told me the story, and said that every man's hand trembled, and none of those present could look into one another's eyes, feeling that they were doing something dreadful. And these are the people whom it is considered necessary, and probably for some reason advantageous, to beat with rods like animals — though it is forbidden to torture even animals.

For the benefit of our Christian and enlightened country it is necessary to subject to this most stupid, most indecent, and most degrading punishment, not all the inhabitants of this Christian and enlightened country, but only that class which is the most industrious, useful, moral, and numerous.

The highest authorities of an enormous Christian empire, nineteen centuries after Christ, to prevent violation of the law, can devise nothing wiser and more moral than to take the transgressors, — grown-up, and sometimes elderly, people, — undress them, lay them on the floor, and beat their bottoms with birches.[1]

And people, who consider themselves most advanced, and who are grandsons of those who, seventy-five years ago, got rid of corporal punishment, now, in our day, most respectfully, and quite seriously, petition his excellency the minister, or whoever it may be, that there

[1] And why choose just this stupid, brutal method of causing pain, and not something else? Why not stick needles into people's shoulders or other parts? or squeeze their hands and feet in vices? or do something of that kind? — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

should not be so much flogging of grown-up Russians, because the doctors are of opinion that it is unhealthy; or that those who have a school diploma should not be whipped; or that those who were to be flogged about the time of the emperor's marriage should be let off. And the wise government meets such frivolous petitions with profound silence, or even prohibits them.

Can one seriously petition on this matter? Is there really any question? Surely there are some deeds which, whether perpetrated by private individuals or by governments, one cannot calmly discuss, and condemn only under certain circumstances. And the flogging of adult members of one particular class of Russian people, in our time, and among our mild and Christianly enlightened folk, is such a deed. To hinder such crimes against all law, human and divine, one cannot diplomatically approach the government under cover of hygienic, or educational, or loyalistic considerations. Of such deeds we must either not speak at all, or we must speak straight to the point, and always with detestation and abhorrence. To ask that only those peasants who are literate should be exempt from being beaten on their bare buttocks, is as if, in a land where the law decreed that unfaithful wives should be punished by being stripped and exposed in the streets, people were to petition that this punishment should only be inflicted on such as could not knit stockings, or do something of that kind.

About such deeds one cannot "most humbly pray," or "lay our petition at the foot of the throne," etc.; such deeds must only, and can only, be denounced. And such deeds should be denounced, because when an appearance of legality is given to them, they disgrace all of us who live in a country in which they are committed. For if it is legal to flog a peasant, this has been enacted for my benefit also, to secure my tranquillity and well-being. And this is intolerable.

I will not, and I cannot, acknowledge a law which infringes all law, human and divine; and I cannot imagine myself confederate with those who enact and confirm such legalized crimes.

If such abominations must be discussed, there is but one thing to say, viz., that no such law can exist; that no ukase, or insignia, or seals, or imperial commands, can make a law out of crime. But that, on the contrary, the dressing up in legal form of such crimes (as that the grown men of one — only one — class, may at the will of another, a worse, class, — the nobles and the officials, — be subjected to an indecent, savage and revolting punishment) shows, better than anything else, that where such sham legalization of crime is possible, there exist no laws at all, but merely the savage license of brute force.

If one has to speak of corporal punishment inflicted on the peasant alone, the needful thing is, not to defend the rights of the local government, or appeal from a governor (who has vetoed a petition to exempt literate peasants from flogging) to a minister, — and from the minister to the senate, and from the senate to the emperor, — as was proposed by the Tambof local assembly, — but one must unceasingly proclaim, and cry aloud, that such applications of a brutal punishment (already abandoned for children) to one — and that the best — class of Russians, is disgraceful to all who, directly or indirectly, participate in it.

Petrovitch, who lay down to be beaten after crossing himself and saying, "Christ suffered and told us to," forgave his tormentors, and after the flogging remained the man he was before. The only result of the torture inflicted upon him was to make him scorn the authority which decrees such punishments. But to many young people, not only the punishment itself, but often even the knowledge that it is possible, acts debasingly on their moral feelings, brutalizing some men and making others desperate. Yet even that is not the chief evil. The greatest evil is in the mental condition of those who arrange, sanction and decree these abominations, of those who employ them as threats, and of all who live in the conviction that such violations of justice and humanity are needful conditions of a good and orderly life. What terrible moral perversion must exist in the

minds and hearts of those — often the young — who, with an air of profound practical wisdom, say (as I have myself heard said) that it won't do not to flog peasants, and that it is better for the peasants themselves to be flogged.

These are the people most to be pitied for the debasement into which they have sunk, and in which they are stagnating.

Therefore, the emancipation of the Russian people from the degrading influence of a legalized crime, is, from every aspect, a matter of enormous importance. And this emancipation will be accomplished, not when exemption from corporal punishment is obtained by those who have a school diploma, or by any other set of peasants, nor even when all the peasants but one are exempted; but it will be accomplished only when the governing classes confess their sin and humbly repent.[1]

December 14, 1895.

[1] Though "Shame" was written by Count Tolstoï in December, 1895, and incompletely printed soon after in a Russian newspaper, this is not only the first English translation published of the article, but it is the first time it has been printed complete in any language; for the Russian version referred to above was mutilated to meet the requirements of the Russian censor, and failed to convey the author's full meaning.

The brutality against which the article protests continues to be practised in Russia, and is still legal. The hope of obtaining moral results by flogging those of whose conduct we disapprove is, however, not confined to Russia. The question of corporal punishment is one which claims attention in England and in some parts of America to-day. — Tr.

NIKOLAÏ PALKIN

WE were spending the night at the house of a soldier ninety-five years old, who had served under Alexander I. and Nicholas I.

"Tell me, are you ready to die?"

"Ready to die? How should I be yet? I used to be afraid of dying, but now I pray God for only one thing; that God would be pleased to let me make my confession and partake of the communion; I have so many sins on my conscience."

"What sins?"

"How can you ask? Let us see, when was it I served? Under Nicholas. Was the service then such as it is now? How was it then? Uh! it fills me with horror even to remember it. Then Alexander came. The soldiers used to praise this Alexander. They said he was gracious."

I remembered the last days of Alexander, when twenty men out of every hundred were beaten to death. Nicholas must have been a terror, if in comparison with him Alexander was called gracious.

"I happened to serve under Nicholas," said the old man, and he immediately began to grow animated and to give me his recollections.

"How was it then? At that time fifty blows with the rod was thought nothing .... one hundred and fifty, two hundred, three hundred .... they used to whip men to death, and with cudgels too. .... Never a week went by that they did not beat one or two men to death from each regiment. To-day people don't know what a cudgel is, but then the word 'palka' was never out of men's mouths. 'Palka!' 'Palka!'

"Among us soldiers he was called Nikolaï Palkin — Nicholas the cudgeler. He was really Nikolaï Pavlovitch, and yet he was called nothing else but Nikolaï Palkin. That was his universal nickname. That's what I remember of that time," continued the old man. "Yes, when one has lived out a century, it is time for one to die, and when you think of it, it becomes hard.

"I have so many sins on my soul! It was a subordinate's work. One had to apply one hundred and fifty blows to a soldier" — the old man had been non-commissioned officer and sergeant major, but was now "kandidat" — "and you give him two hundred. And the man died on your hands, and you tortured him to death .... that was a sin.

"The non-commissioned officers used to beat the young soldiers to death. They would strike them anywhere with the butt-end of the gun or with the fist, over the heart or on the head, and the man would die. And there was never any redress. If a man died, murdered that way, the authorities would write, 'Died by the will of God,' and thus it was covered up. And at that time did I realize what it meant? One thought only of oneself. But now when you crawl up on top of the stove and can't sleep o' nights, you keep thinking about it and living it over again. Good as it is to take the holy communion in accordance with the Christian law and be absolved, still horror seizes you. When you remember all that you have been through, yes, and what others have suffered on your account, then no other hell is necessary; it is worse than any hell."

I vividly imagined what must have been the recollections of this solitary old man there, face to face with death, and a pang went through my heart. I remembered other horrors besides the cudgels, which he must have witnessed: men killed in running the gauntlet, put to death by shooting, the slaughter and pillage of cities in war — he had taken part in the Polish war — and I thought I would question him particularly in regard to all this: I asked him about running the gauntlet. He gave full particulars about this horrible punishment:

how they drove the man, with his arms tied, between two rows of soldiers provided with sharpened sticks, how all struck at him, while behind the soldiers marched the officers shouting "Strike harder." When he told about this the old man gave the order in a commanding tone, evidently well satisfied with his memory and the commanding tone with which he spoke.

He told all the particulars without manifesting the slightest remorse, as if he were telling how they killed oxen and prepared fresh meat. He related how they drove the unhappy victims back and forth between the lines, how the tortured man would at last stumble and fall on the bayonets, how at first the bloody wheals began to appear, how they would cross one another, how gradually the wheals would blend together and swell and the blood would spurt out, how the blood-stained flesh would hang in clots, how the bones would be laid bare; how the wretch at first would scream, then only dully groan at every step and at every blow; how at length no sound would be heard, and the doctor, who was in attendance for this very purpose, would come up, feel the man's pulse, examine and decide whether the punishment could go on, whether he was already beaten to death, or whether it should be postponed till another occasion; and then they would bring him to, so that his wounds might be dressed, and he might be made ready to receive the full sum of blows which certain wild beasts, with Nikolaï Palkin at their head, had decided ought to be administered to him.

The doctor employed his science to keep the man from dying before he had endured all the tortures which his body could be made to endure. And the man, when he could no longer walk a step, was laid flat on the ground in his cloak, and with that bloody swelling over his whole back was carried to the hospital to be treated, so that when he was well again they might give him the thousand or two blows which he had not yet received, and could not bear all at one time.

He told how the victims implored death to come to their relief, and how the officers would not grant it to

them, but would heal them for a second and third time, and at last beat them to death.

And all this because a man had either deserted from his regiment, or had the courage or the audacity and the self-confidence to complain in behalf of his comrades because they were ill fed, and those in command pilfered their rations.

He told all this; and when I tried to draw from him some expression of remorse for these things, he was at first amazed and afterward alarmed.

"No," said he, "that was all right; it was the judgment of the court. Was it my fault? It was by order of the court and according to law."

He displayed the same serenity and lack of remorse regarding the horrors of war, in which he had taken part, and of which he had seen so much in Turkey and Poland.

He told about children murdered, about prisoners dying of cold and starvation, about a young boy — a Polyak — run through by a bayonet and impaled on a tree. And when I asked him if his conscience did not torment him on account of these deeds, he utterly failed to understand me.

"This is all a part of war, according to law; for the Tsar and the fatherland. These deeds are not only not wrong, but are such as are honorable and brave, and atone for many sins." The only things that troubled him were his private actions, the fact that he, when an officer, had beaten and punished men. These actions tormented his conscience. But in order to be pardoned for them he had a resource: this was the holy communion, which he hoped he should be enabled to partake of before he died, and for which he was beseeching his niece. His niece promised that he should have it, because she recognized the importance of it; and he was content.

The fact that he had helped to ruin and destroy innocent women and children, that he had killed men with bullet and bayonet, that he had stood in line and whipped men to death and dragged them off to the hospital and back to torture again, — all this did not trouble him

at all; all this was none of his business, all this was done, not by him, but as it were, by some one else.

How was it possible that this old man, if he had understood what ought to have been clear to him, as he stood on the very threshold of eternity, did not realize that between him and his conscience and God, as now on the eve of death, there was and could be no mediator, so there was and could be none even at that moment when they compelled him to torture and beat men? How is it that he did not understand that now there was nothing that could atone for the evil he had done to men when he might have refrained from doing it? that he did not understand that there is an eternal law which he always knew and could not help knowing — a law which demands love and tenderness for man; and what he called law was a wicked and godless deception to which he should not give credence?

It was terrible to think of what must have arisen before his imagination during his sleepless nights on the oven, and his despair, if he had realized that when he had the possibility of doing good and evil to men, he had done nothing but evil; that when he had learned the distinctions of good and evil nothing else was now in his power than uselessly to torment himself and repent. His sufferings would have been awful!

But why should one desire to trouble him? Why torment the conscience of an old man on the very verge of death? Better give it comfort. Why annoy the people in recalling what is already past?

Past? What is past? Can a severe disease be past only because we say that it is past? It does not pass away, and never will pass away, and cannot pass away as long as we do not acknowledge ourselves sick. To be cured of a disease, one must first recognize it. And this we do not do. Not only do we fail to do it, but we employ all our powers not to see it, not to recognize it.

Meantime, the disease, instead of passing away, changes its form, sinks deeper into the flesh, the blood, the bones. The disease is this: that men born good and gentle, men with love and mercy rooted in

their hearts, perpetrate such atrocities on one another, themselves not knowing why or wherefore.

Our native Russians, men naturally sweet-tempered, good, and kind, permeated with the spirit of Christ's teaching, men who confess in their souls that they would be insulted at the suggestion of their not sharing their last crust with the poor, or pitying those in prison, — these same men spend the best years of their lives in murdering and torturing their brethren, and not only are not remorseful for such deeds, but consider them honorable, or at least indispensable, and just as unavoidable as eating or breathing.

Is not this a horrible disease? Is it not the moral duty of every one to do all in his power to cure it, and first and foremost to point it out, to call it by name?

The old soldier had spent all his life in torturing and murdering other men. We ask, Why talk about it? The soldier did not consider himself to blame; and those dreadful deeds — the cudgel, the running of the gauntlet, and the other things — are all past; why then recall that which is already ancient history? This is done away with.

Nikolaï Palkin is no more. Why recall his régime? Only the old soldier remembered it before his death. Why stir the people up about it?

Thus in the time of Nicholas they spoke of Alexander. In the same way in the time of Alexander they recalled the deeds of Paul. Thus in the time of Paul they spoke of Catharine and all her profligacies, and all the follies of her lovers. Thus in the time of Catharine they spoke of Peter, and so on and so on. Why recall it?

Yes, why?

If I have a severe or dangerous disease difficult to cure, and I am relieved of it, I shall always be glad to be reminded of it. I shall not mention it only when I am suffering, and my suffering continues and grows worse all the time, and I wish to deceive myself; only then I shall not mention it! And we do not mention it because we know that we are still suffering. Why disturb the old man and stir up the people? The

cudgels and the running of the gauntlet — all that is long past!

Past? It has changed its form, but it is not past. In every foregoing period there have been things which we remember not only with horror, but with indignation.

We read the descriptions of distraining for debt, burning for heresy, military colonization, whippings and running of the gauntlet, and are not only horror-struck at the cruelty of man, but we fail to imagine the mental state of those who did such things. What was in the soul of the man who could get up in the morning, wash his face and hands, put on the dress of a boyar, say his prayers to God, then go to the torture-chamber to stretch the joints and whip with the knout old men and women, and spend in this business his ordinary five hours, like the modern functionary in the senate; then return to his family and calmly sit down to dinner and finish the day reading the Holy Scripture? What was in the souls of those regimental and company commanders?

I knew such a man, who one evening danced the mazurka with a beautiful girl at a ball, and retired earlier than usual so as to be awake early in the morning to make arrangements to compel a runaway soldier — a Tartar — to be killed in running the gauntlet; and after he had seen this man whipped to death, he returned to his family and ate his dinner! You see all this took place in the time of Peter, and in the time of Alexander, and in the time of Nicholas. There has not been a time when terrible things of this kind have not taken place, which we in reading about them cannot understand. We cannot understand how men could look on such horrors as they perpetrated, and not see the senselessness of them, even if they did not recognize the bestial inhumanity of them. This has been so in all times. Is our day so peculiar, so fortunate, that we have no such horrors, no such doings, which will seem just as ridiculous and incomprehensible to our descendants? There are just such deeds, just such horrors, only we don't see them, as our predecessors did not see those in their day.

To us now, it is clear that the burning of heretics, the

application of torture for eliciting the truth, is not only cruel, but also ridiculous. A child sees the absurdity of it. But the men of those times did not see it so. Sensible, educated men were persuaded that torture was one of the indispensable conditions of the life of man, that it was hard, nay, impossible, to get along without it. So also with corporal punishment, with slavery. And time passed; and now it is hard for us to comprehend the mental state of men in which such a mistake was possible. But this has been in all times because so it had to be, and also in our time, and we must be just as reasonable in regard to the horrors of our day.

Where are our tortures, our slavery, our whippings? It seems to us that we no longer have such things, that they used to be, but have disappeared. This seems to us so because we do not wish to comprehend the old, and we strenuously shut our eyes to it.

But if we look at the past, then our present position is revealed to us and its causes. If we only called bonfires, branding irons, tortures, the scaffold, recruiting stations, by their real names, then we should find also the right name for dungeons, jails, wars, and the general military obligation, and policemen. If we do not say, "Why mention it?" and if we look attentively at what was done in old times, then we should take notice of what is doing now.

If it became clear to us that it was stupid and cruel to cut men's heads off on the scaffold, and to elicit the truth from their lips by means of tearing their joints asunder, then likewise it would be also equally clear to us — if not even more so — that it is stupid and cruel to hang men, or put them into a state of solitary confinement, even worse than death, and to elicit the truth through hired lawyers and judges.

If it becomes clear to us that it is stupid and cruel to kill a man who has made a mistake, then also it will be clear that it is still more stupid to confine such a man in a jail, in order to finish corrupting him; if it is clear that it is stupid and cruel to compel muzhiks into being soldiers and to brand them like cattle, then it will seem

equally stupid and cruel to make every man who has reached the age of twenty-one become a soldier. If it is clear that stupidity and cruelty are the cause of crime, then still clearer will be the stupidity of guards and police.

If we only cease to shut our eyes to the past, saying: "Why recall the past?" it will become clear to us that we have the same horrors, only under new forms.

We say that all this is past, — now we have no tortures, no adulterous Catharines with their powerful lovers, no more slavery, no more whippings to death, and so on, — but how is it in reality? Nine hundred thousand men in prison and under arrest, shut up in narrow, ill-smelling cells, and dying by a slow physical and moral death. Women and children are left without subsistence, and these men are maintained in caverns of corruption, in prisons, and in squads; and only inspectors, having full control of these slaves, get any advantage from this senseless, cruel confinement of them.

Tens of thousands of men with dangerous ideas go into exile, and carry these ideas into the farthest corners of Russia, go out of their minds, and hang themselves. Thousands sit in prisons, and either kill themselves with the connivance of the prison officers, or go mad in solitary confinement. Millions of the people go to rack and ruin physically and morally in the slavery of the factories. Hundreds of thousands of men every autumn leave their families, their young wives, and take lessons in murder, and systematically go to destruction. The Russian Tsar cannot go anywhere without being surrounded by a visible cordon of a hundred thousand soldiers, stationed ninety steps apart all along the road, and a secret cordon following him everywhere.

A king collects tribute and builds a castle, and in the castle he constructs a pond, and on the pond dyed with blue, with a machine which raises a wind, he sails around in a boat; but his people are perishing in factories: this happens in Ireland and in France and in Belgium.

It does not require great penetration to see that in our day it is just the same, and that our day is just as

fecund with horrors, — with the same horrors, with the same tortures, — and that these, in the eyes of succeeding generations, will seem just as marvelous in their cruelty and stupidity. The disease is the same, and the disease is not felt by those that profit by these horrors.

Let them profit for a hundred, for a thousand times more. Let them build their castles, set up their tents, give their balls, let them swindle the people. Let the Nikolaï Palkins whip the people to death, let them shut up hundreds of men secretly in fortresses; only let them do this themselves, so as not to corrupt the people, so as not to deceive them by compelling them to take part in this, as the old soldier was.

This horrible disease lies in the deception: in this fact that for a man there can be any sanctity and any law higher than the sanctity and the law of love to one's neighbor; in the deception, which conceals the fact, that, though a man in carrying out the demands of men may do many bad things, only one kind of thing he ought not to do. He ought never at any one's instigation to go against God, to kill and to torture his brethren.

Eighteen hundred years ago, to the question of the Pharisees, it was said: "*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.*"

If there was any faith among men and they recognized any duty to God, then above all they would recognize it as their duty before God to do what God Himself taught man when He said: "*Thou shalt not kill*"; when He said, "*Do not unto others what you would not have others do to you*"; when He said, "*Love thy neighbor as thyself*," saying it not in words only, but writing in ineradicable marks on the heart of every man — love to one's neighbor; mercy, horror of murder and of torture of one's brethren.

If men only believed in God, then they could not help acknowledging this first obligation to Him, not to torture, not to kill, and then the words, "*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things*

that are God's," would have for them a clear, definite significance.

"To the Tsar or to any one all he wishes," the believing man would say, "but not what is contrary to God."

Cæsar needs my money — take it; my house, my labors — take them; my wife, my children, my life — take them; all these things are not God's. But when Cæsar requires that I apply the rods to my neighbor's back, that is God's affair. My behavior — that is my life for which I must give an account to God; and what God has forbidden me to do that I cannot give to Cæsar. I cannot bind, imprison, whip, kill my fellowmen; all that is my life, and it belongs to God alone, and I may not give it to any one except God.

The words, "*To God the things that are God's*," for us signify whatever they give to God,— kopeks, candles, prayers, in general everything that is unnecessary to any one, much less to God; but everything else; all one's life, all one's soul which belongs to God, they give to Cæsar; in other words, according to the significance of the word *Cæsar* as understood by the Jews — to some entire stranger. This is horrible! Let the people remember this.

THE FEAST OF ENLIGHTENMENT OF JANUARY TWENTY-FOUR

"WHAT can be more horrible than country festivals?" In nothing can the whole barbarism and ugliness of the life of the people be shown with such distinctness as in country festivals. Men live on week-days; they eat and drink moderately of wholesome food, they labor industriously; they mingle in friendly intercourse. Thus pass weeks, sometimes months, and suddenly this good life is interrupted without any apparent cause. On some special day all simultaneously knock off work, and from noontime on begin to eat rich food to which they are not accustomed; they begin to drink beer and vodka. All drink; the aged compel young men and even children to drink. All congratulate one another, kiss one another, embrace one another, shout, sing songs. Now they are affected to tears, now they boast, now they insult one another, all talk, no one listens; voices are raised, quarrels ensue, sometimes fights. By evening some are staggering, falling prone, and going into a drunken stupor anywhere; others are being led home by those that are still steady enough on their feet, while still others are wallowing and grimacing, filling the air with vile alcoholic fumes.

On the next day all these men sleep off their illness, and when they have somewhat recovered, they again take up their work until the next day of the same kind comes.

What does this mean? Why is it?

Why, it is a festival — a church festival; for one place the Zrameniye,[1] in another the Vvedeniye,[2] in a third the

[1] The Miraculous Appearance of the Virgin Mary.
[2] The Presentation of the Holy Virgin in the Temple.

Kazanskaya. What these terms mean no one knows. They know one thing, that there is an altar and that they must celebrate. And they look forward to this festivity, and after a burdensome life of toil are glad to fall greedily on the food.

Yes, this is one of the very rare expressions of savagery on the part of the working-people. The wine and carousing constitute for them such a temptation that they cannot resist it. The festival comes, and almost every one of them is ready to stupefy himself, and even lose all semblance of human form.

Yes, the people are savage.

But here comes the twenty-fourth of January, and in the newspapers is printed the following notice: —

"The social dinner of the former students of the Imperial Moscow University will take place on the anniversary of its establishment, January 24, at five o'clock in the afternoon, in the restaurant of the Bolshaya Moskovskaya Hotel, at the principal entrance. Tickets for the dinner, at six rubles, may be obtained" .... Then follows a list of places where the tickets may be purchased.

But this is not the only dinner; there will be a dozen others in Moscow, and in Petersburg, and in the provinces. The twenty-fourth of January is the festival of the oldest Russian University, is the festival of Russian enlightenment. The flower of enlightenment celebrates its festival.

It would seem that men standing on the two extreme boundaries of enlightenment — the savage muzhiks and the most cultivated men of Russia — the muzhiks celebrating the "Presentation," or the Virgin of Kazan, and the cultivated men celebrating the festival of enlightenment itself, ought to celebrate their celebrations in an entirely different way. But in reality, it proves that the festival of the most cultivated of men differs in no respect, save in external form, from the festival of the most barbarous of men. The muzhiks seize the church festival without any relation to its meaning, as a pretext for eating and drinking; the enlightened take St. Tatya-

na's Day[1] as a pretext for eating and drinking to repletion, without the least reference to St. Tatyana.

The peasants eat striden'-jelly and vermicelli; the enlightened eat lobsters, cheeses, soups, fillets, and the like: the muzhiks drink beer and vodka; the enlightened drink liquors of various kinds — wines and brandies and liqueurs, dry and strong and sweet and bitter and red and white, and champagne.

The muzhiks' treat costs from twenty kopeks to a ruble; the entertainment of the enlightened comes to anywhere from six to twenty rubles apiece. The muzhiks speak of their love for their godparents, and sing Russian folksongs; the enlightened tell how much they love their *alma mater*, and with entangled tongues sing senseless Latin songs. The muzhiks fall into the mud; and the enlightened sprawl on velvet divans. The muzhiks are carried or led to their places by their wives and sons; the enlightened by lackeys, sober and derisive.

No, in reality this is horrible. It is horrible that men standing, according to their own notion, on the highest degree of human culture, are not able to signalize the festival of enlightenment in any other way than by eating, drinking, smoking, and shouting all manner of nonsense for several hours in succession. It is horrible that elderly men, the guides of the young, help poison them with alcohol — a poison which, like the poison of quicksilver, never entirely disappears, but leaves traces all their lives long. Hundreds and hundreds of young men, egged on by their teachers, have become dead drunk, and been ruined forever and debauched at this festival of enlightenment!

But more horrible than all else is the fact that men who do all this have to such a degree befogged themselves by their conceit, that they can no longer distinguish good from bad, the moral from the immoral. These men have so persuaded themselves that the situation in which they are placed is a situation of enlightenment and culture, and that enlightenment and culture confer the right of indulgence of all their weaknesses,

[1] January 12, O. S.

that they cannot see the beam that is in their eye. These men, who give themselves up to what cannot be called anything else than ugly drunkenness, even in the midst of their ugliness, rejoice in themselves and complain of the unenlightened people.

Every mother suffers — I don't say at the sight of her drunken son, but at the mere thought of such a possibility; every master gets rid of a drunken workman; every unspoiled man is ashamed of himself for having been drunk. All are aware that drunkenness is bad. But here cultured, enlightened men are getting drunk, and they are fully persuaded that in this there is nothing shameful or bad, but that it is very nice, and they laughingly relate the entertaining episodes of their past drunkenness.

It has gone so far that we have the most disgusting orgy, in which old and young get intoxicated together — an orgy annually repeated in the name of enlightenment and culture, and no one is offended, and no one is disturbed; and while they are intoxicated and afterwards, there is great enthusiasm over their elevated feelings and ideas, and they boldly criticize and apprize the morality of other men, and especially of the coarse and unenlightened people.

The muzhik, to a man, will feel that he was to blame if he was drunk, and will ask pardon of every one for his drunkenness. In spite of his temporary fall, he has a lively sense of what is right and wrong. In our society this is beginning to be lost.

Very good, then, you are accustomed to do this and cannot refrain; all right, continue to do so if you cannot restrain yourselves: but understand this only, that on the twenty-fourth or the twenty-seventh or the twenty-ninth of January or February or any other month, this is a vile and shameful thing; and knowing this, give yourselves up to your vicious tendencies, little by little, but do not do so as you are doing it at the present time, triumphantly, confusing and vitiating the young and your so-called youthful confraternity. Do not confuse the young by the teaching that there is any

other civic morality than that founded on self-control, or any other civic immorality than that not founded on self-control.

Every one knows and you know that, before all other civic virtues, continence from vices is necessary; that all intemperance is bad; especially intemperance in the use of wine is the most dangerous, because it kills body and soul. All men know this, and, therefore, before speaking of any elevated feelings and objects, it is requisite for us to free ourselves from the low and savage vice of drunkenness, and not in drunken wise to talk about lofty feelings. So do not deceive yourselves and other men, especially do not deceive the young. The young understand that, by participating in a savage custom upheld by you, they are doing what they ought not to do, and are destroying something very precious and irredeemable.

And you know this — you know that there is nothing better or more important than the purity of soul and body which is destroyed by drunkenness; you know that all your rhetoric with your everlasting *alma mater* does not touch you when you are half-intoxicated, and that you have nothing to offer the young in place of that innocence and purity which they have destroyed by taking part in your orgies.

Therefore, do not prevent them and do not confuse them, but know that, as it was with Noah, as it is with every muzhik, so exactly will it be with every one, shameful, not only to drink so as to shout, to stagger, to leap up on tables and commit all sorts of follies, but shameful also even without any necessity on the occasion of the festival of enlightenment, to eat rich food and obfuscate yourselves with alcohol. Do not lead the young astray, do not by your example pervert them and the servants about you.

Here there are hundreds and hundreds of people serving you, handing you wines and rich foods, taking you home — here are all these people, and live people, before whom, as before all of us, stand the most serious questions of life: is it right, is it wrong? Whose

example shall they follow? Here it is a fine thing that all these lackeys, izvoshchiks, Swisses — Russian men from the country — do not regard you as you regard yourselves, and would wish others to regard you as the representatives of enlightenment. If this were so, they, looking at you, would be disenchanted at every kind of enlightenment and would despise it; but even now, though they do not regard you as the representatives of enlightenment, they nevertheless see in you learned gentlemen who know everything, and, therefore, can and should be followed. And they can put the question to themselves: What will they, poor things, learn from you?

Which is the more powerful: the enlightenment which is spread among the people by public lectures and museums; or the savagery which is sustained and spread among the people by the spectacle of such festivals as the celebration of the twenty-fourth of January, supported by the most enlightened people of Russia?

I think that if all lectures and museums should be done away with, and at the same time all such celebrations and dinners should cease, but the cooks and servant-maids, the izvoshchiks and porters, should spread among themselves in conversations the announcement that all the enlightened men of Russia whom they serve never celebrated their festivals with gluttony and drunkenness, but were able to have good times and dine without wine, then enlightenment would not suffer in the least.

It is time to understand that enlightenment is not spread by a few obscure pictures, nor by verbal and printed words, but by the infectious example of the whole life of the people; and that enlightenment not based on a moral life never was and never will be enlightenment at all, but will always be only obfuscation and perversion.

TO GOD OR MAMMON

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." — LUKE xvi. 13.

"He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not for me scatters abroad." — MATTHEW xii. 30.

ENORMOUS tracts of the very best lands by which millions of now poverty-stricken families might be supported are devoted to tobacco, vineyards, barley, hemp, and especially rye and potatoes, employed in the production of intoxicating beverages: wine, beer, and mainly brandy.

Millions of laborers who might be making things useful for men are occupied in the production of these things. In England it is estimated that one-tenth of all the laboring men are occupied in the manufacture of brandy and beer.[1]

What are the consequences of the manufacture and consumption of tobacco, wine, vodka, beer?

There is a terrible story about a monk who laid a wager with the devil that he would not admit him into his cell; if he let him in, he agreed to do whatever the devil should order him to do. The story tells how the devil took the form of a wounded raven with its bloody

[1] According to the statistics published by the Imperial Bureau, the consumption of beer in Germany during the year 1897–1898 was 1,383,700,000 gallons, while it was 1,237,000,000 gallons in the United States, 1,192,000,000 gallons in Great Britain, 463,500,000 gallons in Austria-Hungary, 279,000,000 gallons in Belgium, 180,000,000 in France, and a little over 90,000,000 gallons in Russia. The consumption of beer per head of the population is estimated at 36 gallons in Belgium, 32 in Great Britain, 25 in Germany, 21 in Denmark, 12 in Switzerland, 10 in the United States, 9½ in Austria-Hungary, 9 in Holland, 5 in France, 3½ in Norway, 2½ in Sweden, and 1 in Russia. —ED.

wing trailing, and hopped about pitifully at the door of the monk's cell. The monk had compassion on the raven and took him into his cell; and then the devil, having obtained entrance, gave the monk a choice among three crimes: murder, fornication, or drunkenness. The monk chose drunkenness, thinking that if he got intoxicated he would harm only himself. But when the liquor had overcome him, he lost control of his reason, he went to the village and there, yielding to temptation of a woman, he committed adultery with her, and then murder by defending himself from the husband, who returned and attacked him.

Thus are pictured the consequences of drunkenness in the old story, and nowise different in real life are the consequences of the use of intoxicating beverages. It is an unusual burglar or murderer who perpetrates his crime while sober. According to the reports of courts it is seen that nine-tenths of misdemeanors are accomplished when people are tipsy. The most convincing proof that the large number of misdemeanors are traceable to liquor is afforded by the fact that in certain states of America, where wine and the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors are prohibited, crimes have almost ceased. There are no robberies, or thefts, or murders, and the jails are empty.

Such is one consequence of the use of intoxicating drinks.

Another consequence is the harmful influence produced by intoxicating beverages on the health of the people. Besides the fact that from the use of intoxicating drinks arise various painful illnesses peculiar to drunkards, many of whom die of them, it is to be noted that men who drink recuperate from ordinary diseases with greater difficulty than others, so that in life insurance, the insurance companies always prefer the risks on those that do not make use of intoxicating drinks.

This is the second consequence of the use of intoxicating beverages.

The third and most horrible consequence of intoxicating beverages is that liquor darkens the intellect and

conscience of men; from the use of liquor men grow coarser, stupider, and wickeder.

What advantage is there from the use of intoxicating drinks?

None!

The advocates of vodka, wine, beer, assure us in advance that these drinks enhance the health and strength, that they warm and cheer. But now it is indisputably proved that this is not true. Intoxicating beverages do not improve the health, because they contain a violent poison, — alcohol, — and the use of a poison cannot fail to be injurious.

That wine does not increase a man's strength has been proved many times, and by the fact that when the work of a drinking mechanic and of a mechanic who does not drink are compared, during the course of months and years, it is always proved that the non-drinking man does more work and better work than the drinker; and by the fact that in those companies of soldiers which on campaigns use vodka there are always more incapacitated and more stragglers than in those where vodka is not used.

In exactly the same way it has been proved that liquor does not warm, and that the heat felt after drinking liquor does not hold out long, and that the man, after the brief increase in temperature, soon grows colder than ever, so that a drinking man always finds it much harder to endure prolonged cold than a non-drinker. People who freeze to death every year are frozen, for the most part, because they warm themselves with liquor.

It is not necessary to prove also that the gaiety that comes from wine is not real and not a joyous gaiety. Every one knows what sort of thing this drunken gaiety is. All that it requires is to take a look at what is done in cities on holidays, at the drinking-places, and in the rural districts; at what is done on holidays or at weddings and christenings. This drunken gaiety always ends with insulting words, fights, injured members, all kinds of crimes, and the loss of human dignity.

Wine does not conduce to the health or the strength, or the warmth or the gaiety, but only brings great injury to men. And therefore it would seem to be the wise course for every reasonable and decent man, not only not to use intoxicating drinks himself and not to set them before others, but also to try with all his might to stop the common use of this unprofitable and injurious poison.

But unfortunately this is not at all the case. Men are so wedded to old habits and customs, and find it so difficult to do away with them, that there are in our day very many good, kind, and reasonable men who not only do not forswear the use of intoxicating beverages and the regalement of others with them, but even defend it with all their ability. "Wine," they say, "is not to blame, but drunkenness is to be condemned. King David said, 'Wine cheers the heart of man.' Christ in Cana of Galilee sanctified wine. If it were not for the drinking habit government would be deprived of its chief revenue. It is impossible to celebrate a holiday, to hold a wedding, or a christening, without wine. One must drink something at the conclusion of a bargain or a sale, or at the meeting with a dear friend."

"In our poverty and in our labor we must drink," says the poor laboring man.

"If we drink only occasionally and temperately, we do no harm to any one," say well-to-do people.

"The gayety of Russia is in drinking," said Prince Vladimir.

"By our drinking we do no harm to any one but ourselves. And if we harm only ourselves then that is our affair; we don't want to teach any one and we don't want to be taught by any one; we did not begin this and it is not for us to put an end to it," say frivolous people.

Thus talk drinking men of various conditions and ages, trying to justify themselves. But these justifications, which availed some decades of years ago, now no longer avail. It was well enough to say this when all men thought that the use of intoxicating drinks was a harmless pleasure, that intoxicating drinks enhanced a

man's health and strength; when they did not, as yet, know that wine contained a poison always injurious to the health of men; when men did not, as yet, realize the terrible consequences of drunkenness, which are now patent to all eyes.

It was possible to say this when there were not, as yet, these hundreds and thousands of men prematurely dying in cruel torments simply because they had learned to drink intoxicating beverages, and could not, as yet, abstain from the use of them. It was well to say that wine is a harmless pleasure before we had seen those hundreds and thousands of poor tormented women and children suffering because their husbands and fathers had learned to drink wine.

It was well enough to say this before we had witnessed these hundreds and thousands of criminals filling the jails; the exiles, galley-slaves, and ruined women, who had fallen into this condition owing to wine.

It was well enough to say this before we knew that hundreds of thousands of men, who might have lived their lives with delight to themselves and others, have ruined their energies and their intellects and their souls simply because intoxicating beverages existed and they were tempted by them.

And therefore it is no longer possible, in our time, to say that the drinking or non-drinking of wine is a private affair, that we do not consider the moderate use of wine injurious to ourselves, and do not wish to teach any one or be taught by any one, that we did not begin it and it is not for us to end it. It is impossible to say this now; the use of wine or abstinence from it is, in our day, not a private matter, but a public matter.

Now all men — it is all the same whether they wish it or do not wish it — are divided into two camps: those in the one camp are fighting against the employment of a useless poison — intoxicating drinks — both by word and deed, not using wine and not offering it to others; those in the opposite camp uphold both by word and, more powerfully than all else, by force of example the use of this poison, and this contest is going on at the

present time in all nations, and now for twenty years with especial violence in Russia.

"As long as you did not know you were without sin," said Christ. But now we know what we are doing and whom we are serving when we use wine and offer it to others, and consequently, if we, who know the sin of using wine, go on drinking or offering it to others, then we have no justification.

And let not men say that it is impossible to avoid drinking and offering wine on special occasions — on holidays and at weddings and similar occasions; that all do this, that our fathers and grandfathers did this, and therefore it is impossible for us alone to stand out against all the rest.

This is false; our fathers and grandfathers did away with those evil and harmful practices, the ill effects of which became manifest to them; in the same way also we are bound to do away with the evil which has become manifest in our day. And the fact that wine has become a frightful evil in our day is beyond all question.

How, then, if I know that the use of intoxicating drinks is an evil, destroying hundreds of thousands of men, can I offer this evil to my friends who come to my house for a festival, a christening, or a wedding?

Not always was everything as it is now, but everything has changed from worse to better; and the change has come about, not of itself, but by people fulfilling what has been demanded of them by reason and conscience. And now our reason and our conscience in the most actual manner demand of us that we cease drinking wine and offering it to others.

As a general thing men consider worthy of censure and scorn such drunkards as go to taverns and drinking-rooms, and get so full that they lose their reason, and become so addicted to wine that they cannot control themselves, and drink up all they have. The very men who buy wine for home use drink every day and in moderation, and offer wine to their guests in circumstances when it is used — and such men are considered good and honorable and not as doing any harm. And

yet these very people are more worthy of censure than the drunkards. The drunkards have become drunkards simply because those that were not drunkards, those that did themselves no harm, taught them to drink wine, tempted them by their example.

Drunkards never would have become drunkards if they had not seen honored men, men respected by every one, drinking wine and offering it to others. A young man who has never taken wine will know the taste and the effect of wine at festivals, at weddings, at the houses of these honored people who are not themselves drunkards, but who drink and set it before their guests on certain occasions.

And so he who drinks wine, no matter how moderately, or offers it in whatever special circumstances, commits a great sin. He tempts those whom he is commanded not to tempt, of whom it is said, *Woe to him that tempts one of these little ones.*

It is said, "We did not begin it, it is not for us to end it."

It is for us to end it if we only understand that for every one of us the drinking or non-drinking of wine is not a matter of indifference; that with every bottle of wine bought, every glass of wine imbibed, we are serving that terrible devilish deed whereby the best strength of humanity is wasted; but, on the other hand, by refraining from wine for ourselves, and by doing away with the senseless custom of using wine at festivals, weddings, and christenings, we are performing a work of the utmost importance — our soul's work, God's work. As soon as we have understood this, then will drunkenness be stopped by us.

And therefore, my reader, whoever you may be — a young man only just entering upon life, or a grown man who have already established your life, a master of a house or a mistress of a house, or an aged man, — for whom now the time is near for accounting for the deeds you have done, — whether you are rich or poor, famous or unknown, whoever you are, it is impossible for you to stand between these two camps; you must infallibly

choose one of the two: oppose drunkenness or coöperate with it — serve God or mammon.

If you are a young man who have never as yet taken liquor, never as yet been poisoned by the poison of wine, treasure your innocence and freedom from temptation. If you taste, the temptation will be all the harder for you to overcome it. And do not believe that wine will increase your gaiety. At your time of life gaiety is natural, genuine, good gaiety; and wine only changes your true, innocent gaiety into a drunken, senseless, vicious gaiety.

Above all beware of wine, because at your time of life it will be harder for you to resist other temptations; wine weakens in you the force of reason, which is most needful at your age to help you resist temptations. After you have imbibed you will do what you would not think of doing when sober. Why subject yourself to such a terrible risk? If you are a grown man who have already got into the habit of using intoxicating drinks, or who are just beginning to form that habit, make haste while there is yet time to get out of this awful habit, or else before you look around it will get control of you, and you may become like those that are irrevocably drunkards, who have perished by reason of wine. All of them began just as you have. Even if you have the ability throughout your life to use intoxicating drinks in moderation, and may not yourself become a drunkard, yet if you continue to drink wine and serve it at your table, you may perhaps make your younger brother, your wife, your children, drunkards, for they may not have the strength as you have to confine themselves to a moderate use of wine.

And above all understand that on you as a man, who have reached the very prime of life, as the master of the house, as the controller of the destiny of others, rests the responsibility of guiding the lives of your household. And therefore if you know that wine brings no advantage, but causes great evil to men, then not only are you not obliged slavishly to do as your fathers and grandfathers used to do, — to use wine, to buy it and serve it to others, — but, on the

contrary, you are bound to avoid this habit and keep it from others.

And be not afraid that the change in the custom of drinking wine at festivals, christenings, and weddings, will very deeply humiliate or trouble people. In many places they have already begun to do this, substituting for the wine appetizing viands and temperance drinks, and people only at first, and the very stupidest, wonder, but quickly get used to it and approve.

If you are an old man, at an age when you will very shortly be called upon to render your account to God, how you have served Him, and instead of warning the young and inexperienced from wine, the terrible evil of which you must have seen in the course of your life, you have tempted your neighbor by your example, drinking wine and offering it to others, you have been committing a mighty sin.

Woe to the world because of temptations! Temptations must come into the world, but woe to him through whom they come.

Only let us understand that in the matter of using wine there is no half way, and we either desire it or do not desire it — we must choose between two courses — serving God or serving mammon. *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not for me scatters abroad.*[1]

[1] Matthew xii. 30.

1895.

WHY DO PEOPLE STUPEFY THEMSELVES?

I

WHAT is this demand for stupefying things, — vodka, wine, beer, hashish, opium, tobacco, and others less universally used; ether, morphine, mukhomor[1]? Why did it begin and so quickly spread, and why does it still spread among all classes of men, savage and civilized alike? What does it mean that everywhere, if there is not vodka, wine, and beer, there you find opium or hashish, mukhomor, and other things, and tobacco everywhere?

Why must people need stupefy themselves? Ask a man why he began to drink wine and still drinks it, and he will answer you, "Why, it's agreeable, every one drinks," and he will add, "for gayety's sake."

Some who have never once given themselves the trouble of thinking whether it is right or wrong for them to drink wine, will add that wine is wholesome and gives strength; in other words, they will say what has long ago been proved to be incorrect. Ask a smoker why he began to smoke tobacco and still smokes, and he will reply in the same manner, "Why, to cure low spirits; every one smokes."

[1] *Amanita muscaria.* In certain parts of Russia, these mushrooms are eaten dry and swallowed without mastication, thus producing an extended intoxication. Made into a decoction with willow runners or whortleberry, it becomes a social intoxicant, the effects of which are wild exhilaration and often an increase of strength, so that a man under its influence has been known to run miles bearing heavy burdens. It is so powerful that children have been poisoned by the milk of women who had shortly before been under its influence. Its alkaloid is allied to that of hashish or Indian hemp. — ED.

Thus also will probably reply the devotees of opium, hashish, morphine, agaricum.

"Why! to cure low spirits, for gayety's sake, all do it."

But it is just as good as *a cure for low spirits* or for *gayety's sake*, because *all do it*, to twirl one's fingers, to whistle, to sing songs, to play on the dudka, and do other things; in other words, to do anything whatever, for which it is not necessary to squander ancestral wealth or expend great physical powers, to do what does not bring manifest woe on yourself and on others. But for the production of tobacco, wine, hashish, opium, often among settlements needing land, millions and millions of better lands are occupied with crops of rye, potatoes, hemp, poppies, grape-vines, and tobacco, and millions of workmen — in England one-eighth of the whole population — are engaged their whole lives long in the production of these stupefying objects.

Moreover, the use of these things is manifestly injurious, producing terrible evils, known and confessed by every one, causing the destruction of more human beings than have perished in all wars and contagious diseases together.

And men know this; so that it cannot be that this is done to keep men's spirits up, for gayety's sake, simply because all do this.

There must be something else in it. All the time and everywhere you meet with men who love their children, are ready to make all kinds of sacrifices for their well-being, and yet squander on vodka, wine, beer, or spend on opium or hashish, or even on tobacco, enough to feed their suffering and starving children, or, at least, keep them from deprivation. Evidently if a man placed under the necessity of choosing between subjecting his family which he loves to suffering and privation, and refraining from stupefying things, nevertheless chooses the first, he is stimulated to this by something more serious than that every one does it and it is pleasant. Evidently it is not done to raise spirits, or for gayety's sake, but there is some more important reason.

This reason, as far as I can understand it from reading about this subject and observations on other men, and especially on myself when I used to drink wine and smoke tobacco — this reason, according to my observations, is as follows: —

During the period of conscious life a man can frequently detect in himself two separate beings: one blind, physical, and the other gifted with sight, spiritual. The blind animal being eats, drinks, rests, sleeps, propagates, and moves about like a machine wound up; the seeing spiritual being, connected with the animal, itself does nothing, but only estimates the activity of the living being by coinciding with it when it approves of this activity, and by being indignant with it when it does not approve.

This seeing being may be compared to the needle of a compass, which points with one end to the north, with the other in the opposite direction, to the south; and, being protected in its whole extent by a strip, is invisible as long as the thing that carries the needle moves in its direction, but comes out and becomes visible as soon as that which carries the needle turns from the direction indicated.

In exactly the same way the seeing spiritual being, the manifestation whereof in common language we call conscience, always points with one pole toward the right, and with the other, its opposite, toward the wrong, and is not noticed by us until we turn aside from the direction given to us — that is to say, from wrong to right. But it requires to perform some action contrary to the direction of conscience for the consciousness of the spiritual being to appear, showing the deviation of the animal activity from the direction indicated by conscience. And as a sailor could not continue to work with oars, machinery, or sails, if he knew that he was going in the wrong direction, until he gave his course the direction indicated by the needle of the compass, or else hid from himself the deviation; just exactly so every man who is conscious of the duality of his conscience and his animal activity cannot continue this

activity until he either brings it into accordance with his conscience, or conceals from himself the warnings of conscience about the injustice of his animal life.

The whole life of man, we may say, consists only of these two activities: (1) the bringing of one's activity into harmony with conscience; and (2) the concealing from oneself of the indications of conscience so as to be able to continue a certain course of life.

Some do the first, others do the second. For the attainment of the first there is only one means — the moral enlightenment, an increase of light in oneself, and attention to that which the light shines on; for the second — to hide from oneself the monitions of conscience — there are two methods: one external, one internal. The external method consists in occupations which draw the attention away from the monitions of conscience; the internal method consists in darkening conscience itself.

As a man may hide from his eyes any object before him in two ways, by an external turning away of his eyes to something else more striking, and by shutting his eyes; just so a man may hide from himself the monitions of his conscience by a twofold method — the external by diverting his attention with all kinds of occupations, labors, amusements, games; the internal by blinding the organ of attention itself.

For men with an obtuse, limited moral sense, it is often simply sufficient to have external diversions, so as not to perceive the monitions of conscience about their irregular lives. But for men morally keen, such a method is not generally sufficient.

The external methods do not completely divert the attention from the discordance between life and the demands of conscience; this consciousness makes it hard to live, and men in order to be able to live have recourse to an unquestionable inward method of blinding conscience itself, and this consists in poisoning the brain with stupefying things.

Life is not what it should be according to the demands of conscience. One cannot possibly turn one's life into conformity with its demands. The diversions which

might distract from a consciousness of this dissonance are insufficient or they become disgusting, and so as to be in a condition to prolong existence, notwithstanding the monitions of conscience about its irregularities, men temporarily cut short its activity by poisoning that organ through which the monitions of conscience are manifested, just as a man purposely shutting his eyes would hide what he would not wish to see.

II

Not in taste, not in pleasure, not in dissipation, not in gayety, lies the explanation for the universal use of hashish, opium, wine, tobacco, but wholly in the necessity that men have for concealing from themselves the monitions of conscience.

I was going along the street once, and as I passed two izvoshchiks disputing, I heard one say to the other: —

"It's a certain fact, on my conscience as sure as I am sober."

What appeals to a sober man's conscience does not appeal to a drunken man's. In these words was expressed the essential fundamental reason, why men have recourse to stupefying things. Men have recourse to them either so as not to feel the pricking of conscience after committing some act contrary to conscience, or so as to bring themselves into a condition to commit some act which is contrary to conscience, but to which a man's animal nature tempts him.

A sober man has conscientious scruples about going to dissolute women, about stealing, about committing murder. A drunken man has no such scruples; and so, if a man wishes to commit an act which his conscience forbids him to do, he stupefies himself.

I remember being struck by the testimony at court of a cook who had killed a relative of mine, a lady in whose service he had been. He told how when he had sent away his mistress, the chambermaid, and the time had come for him to act, he went with his knife into her

sleeping room, but felt that while he was sober he could not perpetrate the act which he had planned. .... This was "the conscience of a sober man." He went back and drank two glasses of vodka which he had prepared in anticipation of it, and then only did he feel that he was ready, and acted.

Nine-tenths of all crimes are accomplished in that way: "drinking to keep up the courage."

Half of the women that fall, fall through the influence of wine. Almost all visits to houses of ill fame are made by men in a state of drunkenness. Men know the power of wine in drowning out the voice of conscience, and deliberately employ it with that end in view.

Moreover, men stupefy themselves in order to deaden conscience — knowing how wine acts, they, wishing to compel other men to commit some act contrary to their conscience, purposely stupefy them, organize the stupefication of men so as to deprive them of their consciences. In war they always get soldiers drunk when they are to fight hand to hand. All the French soldiers in the assault on Sevastopol were thoroughly drunk.

All of us know of men who have become drunkards in consequence of crimes tormenting their consciences. All can bear witness that men living immoral lives are more inclined than others to the use of stupefying things. Bands of thugs and robbers, prostitutes, never live without wine. All know and acknowledge that the use of stupefying things is in consequence of the reproach of conscience, that in certain immoral professions stupefying things are employed for the deadening of conscience. All know and acknowledge that the use of stupefying things deadens the conscience, that a drunken man is punished for crimes which he would never dare to think of when sober. All are agreed in regard to this: but — strangely enough — when, in consequence of the use of stupefying things, such deeds as theft, murder, violence, and the like do not make their appearance; when stupefying things are taken, not after terrible crimes, but by men of the professions which

are not considered by us as criminal; and when these things are not taken all at once in great quantities, but all the time, in moderation, —then somehow it is supposed that stupefying things do not affect the conscience, deadening it.

Thus it is taken for granted that the drinking by an opulent Russian of a glass of vodka every day before each meal and a glass of wine at each meal, by a Frenchman of his absinthe, by an Englishman of his port and porter, by a German of his beer, and the smoking by a well-to-do Chinaman of his moderate portion of opium, and the smoking of tobacco, are done only for pleasure, and have no influence on the consciences of men.

It is taken for granted that if, after this ordinary stupefying of themselves, men do not commit such crimes as robbery and murder, but only certain stupid and wicked actions, then these actions are spontaneous, and are not produced by the drugging. It is taken for granted that if these men do not commit some capital crime, then they have no reason for deadening their consciences, and that the life which is led by men who are all the time stupefying themselves is a perfectly good life, and would be just the same if these men did not stupefy themselves. It is taken for granted that the constant use of stupefying things does not darken their consciences.

Notwithstanding the fact that every one knows by experience that from the use of wine and tobacco the disposition is changed, and things which without their incitation would have been shameful, cease to be shameful; that after every reproach from conscience, however slight it was then, is such a tendency toward folly that under the influence of stupefying things it is difficult to think of one's life and one's position; and that the constant and moderate use of things that stupefy produces the same physiological effect as the immediate and immoderate use of them, — to men who drink and smoke in moderation it seems that they use stupefying things, not at all for the deadening of their consciences, but merely for their taste and satisfaction.

But it requires only to think about this seriously and dispassionately, without any special pleading, to understand that in the first place, if the use of stupefying things taken in large quantities at a time deadens a man's conscience, then the constant use of these things must produce the same effect, since the stupefying things always act physiologically in the same way — always exciting and then moderating the activity of the brain, whether they be taken in large or in small quantities; and in the second place, that if stupefying things have the power of deadening the conscience, then they have it always, both when under their influence murder, robbery, or violence is perpetrated, and also when under their influence a word is spoken which would not be spoken, when thoughts and feelings would be aroused which without them would not have been aroused. And in the third place, that if the use of stupefying things is necessary for robbers, murderers, and prostitutes to stifle their consciences with, then it is just as necessary for men occupied in professions of which their consciences do not approve, even though these professions are called lawful, and are held in honor by other men. In a word, it is impossible not to understand that the use of stupefying things in large or in small quantities, periodically or constantly, in upper or lower circles, is due to one and the same cause — the need of quieting the voice of conscience so as not to see the discord between life and the demands of conscience.

III

In this only is the reason for the spread of all kinds of stupefying things, and among others of tobacco, perhaps the widest spread and most dangerous of them all.

It is taken for granted that tobacco enlivens and clears the mind, that, like every other habit, it allures to itself, in no case producing that effect of deadening conscience such as is caused by wine. But all it re-

quires is to look more carefully at the conditions in which special temptation to smoke appears, in order to be convinced that the stupefaction caused by tobacco, just the same as that caused by wine, affects the conscience, and that men consciously have recourse to this form of stupefaction, especially when they need it for this object.

If tobacco merely cleared the mind and made men cheerful, then there would not be any of that terrible necessity of using it and especially in certain definite circumstances, and men would not say that they had rather give up bread than their tobacco, and they would not in reality often prefer smoking to eating.

That cook who murdered his baruinya said that, when he went into her bedroom and cut her throat, and she fell back with the death rattle, and the blood spurted out in a torrent, a panic seized him.

"I could not finish the job," he said; "I went from the bedroom into the drawing-room, sat down there, and smoked a cigarette."

Only when he had stupefied himself with tobacco, did he feel sufficiently fortified to return to the bedroom, and finish despatching the old lady, and examine her things.

Evidently the need of smoking at that minute was induced in him, not by the desire to clear or cheer his mind, but by the necessity of drowning something which prevented him from accomplishing the deed he had planned.

Such a definite necessity of stupefying oneself by tobacco in certain very difficult moments will occur to every smoker. I remember that in the days when I smoked I used to feel the special need of tobacco. It was always at moments when I wanted not to remember what I remembered, wanted to forget, wanted not to think.

I am sitting alone, I am doing nothing, I know that I ought to begin my work, and I do not feel like it. I smoke and continue sitting idle.

I promised some one to be at his house at five o'clock

and I have stayed too long. I remember that I am late, but I do not want to remember it, and I smoke. I am annoyed, and I say something disagreeable to a man, and I know that I am doing wrong, and I see that I ought to stop doing so, but I feel an inclination to my bad temper — I smoke, and I continue to be angry.

I am playing cards, and I am losing more than I wanted to hazard — I smoke.

I have placed myself in an awkward position, I have done something wrong, I have made a mistake, and I must recognize my position in order to escape from it, but I do not want to do so — I blame others and smoke! I am writing and am not quite satisfied with what I am writing. I ought to throw it away, but I want to finish writing what I had in mind, and I smoke. I am discussing, and I see that my opponent and I do not understand and cannot understand each other; but I want to express my thoughts to the end, and I go on speaking, and I smoke.

The peculiarity of tobacco, distinguishing it from other stupefying things, besides the faculty which it offers for stupefying and its apparent harmlessness, includes also its portability, so to speak, the possibility of applying it to various minor occasions. To say nothing of the fact that the use of opium, wine, hashish, is coupled with certain accessories which cannot always be had, while one can always take tobacco and paper with one, and that the smoker of opium, the alcohol user, arouses horror, while the man that smokes tobacco presents nothing repulsive; the advantage of tobacco over other intoxicants is that, whereas the intoxication of opium, hashish, or wine is spread over all impressions and acts, received or produced during a sufficiently protracted period of time, the intoxication of tobacco may be directed to every separate occasion.

If you want to do what you ought not to do, you will smoke a cigarette, you will stupefy yourself just as much as is necessary in order to do what ought not to be done, and again you are fresh and can think and speak clearly; for if you feel that you have been doing what you ought

not to have done, again comes the cigarette, and the disagreeable consciousness of the wrong or awkward action is done away with, and you can occupy yourself with other things and forget.

But to say nothing of the frequent occasions when every smoker betakes himself to smoking, not for a gratification of habit and a pastime, but as a means of deadening conscience for actions which have to be performed, or are already performed, — is not the strenuous definite interdependence between men's ways of life and their passion for smoking evident?

When do boys begin to smoke?

Almost always when they lose their childish innocence.

Why do smokers cease to smoke as soon as they come into more moral conditions of life, and begin to smoke as soon as they come into perverted environment? Why do gamblers almost all smoke? Why is it that the women that lead a moral life smoke least of all? Why do prostitutes and madmen *all* smoke?

Habit is habit, but evidently smoking is directly dependent on the need of deadening conscience, and it attains its end. How far smoking deadens the voice of conscience may be observed in the case of almost any smoker. Every smoker, yielding to his passion, either forgets or despises the very first demands of society, such as he claims from others and observes in all other circumstances, as long as his conscience is not smothered by tobacco. Every man of our average education recognizes that it is not proper, polite, or humane for one's own pleasure to disturb the comfort and happiness and still more the health of others. No one permits himself to wet a room where people are sitting, or to make a disturbance or shout, or admit a cold, hot, or fetid atmosphere, or perform actions which disturb or injure others. But out of a thousand smokers not one hesitates to puff out volumes of smoke into a room where women or children that do not smoke are breathing the atmosphere. Even if smokers are accustomed to ask of those present, "Is it disagreeable to you?" — they all

know that the usual reply is, "Oh, we like it!"—notwithstanding the fact that it cannot be pleasant for one not smoking to breathe the vitiated air, and to find stinking cigar-ends in glasses, cups, and plates, on candlesticks or even in ash-trays.

But even if grown-up non-smokers endure tobacco, at least for children, of whom no one asks permission, it cannot possibly be agreeable or advantageous. But, meantime, respectable people, humane in all the other relations of life, smoke in the presence of children, at dinners, in little rooms, vitiating the atmosphere with tobacco smoke, and not feeling the slightest pricking of conscience because they do so.

It is generally said, and I used to say, that smoking conduces to intellectual labor. And undoubtedly this is so, if one considers only the amount of intellectual labor. It seems to a man who smokes, and therefore ceases to value and weigh his thought, it seems as if many thoughts suddenly occurred to him. But it is not at all that many thoughts have occurred, but only that he has lost control of his thoughts.

When a man is working he is always conscious of two beings in himself; the one working, the other estimating the work. The stricter the estimate the slower and the better the work, and *vice versa*. If the one that estimates finds himself under the influence of an intoxication, then there will be more of the work, but its quality will be worse. "If I do not smoke, I cannot write. If I do not drink, I begin, but I cannot go on."

This is commonly said, and I used to say so. What does it mean? Either that you have nothing to write, or else that what you wish to write is not yet sufficiently matured in your inner consciousness, but is only confusedly beginning to present itself to you, and the estimating critic dwelling in you, not being stupefied by tobacco, tells you so. If you did not smoke you would put aside what you had begun, and await the time when what you had in mind became clear to you, you would try to think out what had dimly presented itself to you, you would consider the objections that

arose, and you would direct your whole attention to clarifying your thought.

But you smoke, and the critic who has his seat within you becomes stupefied, and the obstacle in your work is removed. What seemed to you insignificant when you were unintoxicated with tobacco again acquires importance; what seemed to you obscure, no longer seems so; the obstacles rising before you are concealed, and you continue to write, and you write much and rapidly.

IV

"But," it is frequently said, "may not a slight brief change, like the mild exhilaration produced by a moderate use of wine and tobacco, bring about some significant results? It is comprehensible that if a man smokes opium, hashish, or drinks so much wine as to fall and lose his senses, the consequences of such a stupefying of himself may be very grave; but that a man should come under the exceedingly mild effects of alcoholic exhilaration or tobacco could never have any serious consequences."

It seems to people that a slight intoxication, a slight darkening of consciousness, can never produce a serious effect. But to think so is the same as to think that it may be injurious to a watch to strike it against a stone, but that to put an obstacle in its works cannot harm it.

You see the chief work which moves the whole life of a man proceeds not in the motion of arms and legs, the physical powers, but in the consciousness. In order for a man to accomplish something with his arms and legs, he must first undergo a certain change in his consciousness. And this change determines all the man's subsequent acts. These changes are always brief, almost unnoticeable. Brüllof was correcting an *étude* for a pupil. The pupil, glancing at the changes that had been made, said: —

"Here you have scarcely touched the *étude*, but it is entirely changed."

Brüllof answered: —

"Art begins where scarcely begins."

This observation is strikingly true, not in relation to art alone, but to all of life. It may be said that a true life begins where "scarcely" begins, where the scarcely perceptible, almost infinitely small, changes take place. The true life is produced, not where the great externals are effectuated, where men move about, jostle one another, struggle, and fight, but it is produced where the scarcely differentiated changes are accomplished.

The true life of Raskolnikof[1] was not accomplished when he killed the old money-lender and her sister. While he was killing the old woman, and especially her sister, he was not living his true life, but was acting like a machine, doing what he could not help doing, discharging the cartridge with which he had long ago been loaded. One old woman lay killed, the other was before him there; the ax was in his hand.

The true life of Raskolnikof was not proceeding at the time when he met the old woman's sister, but at the time when he had not as yet killed even the old woman herself, had not yet entered another person's room with murder in view, had not taken the ax in his hand, had not the noose under his cloak on which he hung it, before he had ever thought of the old woman; but it was while he was lying on the divan in his own room, not even thinking of the old woman or even whether he could or could not at the will of another man wipe from the face of the earth a useless and dangerous person, but was deciding whether it was suitable or not for him to live in Petersburg, whether it was suitable or not for him to take money from his mother, and other questions not at all affecting the old woman. And here at that time, in the animal kingdom, entirely independent of the reality, were decided the questions whether he should or should not kill the old money-lender. These questions were decided, not when he, having killed one old woman, stood with his ax before the second, but at the

[1] The hero of Dostayevsky's most famous novel, "Crime and Punishment." — Ed.

time when he had not yet acted, but was only thinking, when his conscience alone was working, and in this conscience scarcely perceptible changes were taking place.

Now there is often needed the greatest clearness of mind, especially important for the regular decision of a question, and a single glass of wine, a single cigarette smoked, may prevent the decision of the question, may turn this question, may stifle the voice of conscience, may make the decision of the question, to the profit of the lower animal nature as was the case with Raskolnikof.

The changes are imperceptible, and from them come the most enormous and awful consequences. From what happens when a man has decided and begun to act, great material changes may ensue: houses, property, men's bodies, may be destroyed, but nothing can happen greater than what was hidden in the man's conscience. The limits of what may come forth are given to conscience.

But from the scarcely perceptible changes which take place in the domain of the conscience may proceed consequences utterly beyond the power of the imagination to show their importance, and wholly beyond limits.

Let it not be thought that what I say has anything in common with questions of free will or determinism.

Discussions about these subjects are superfluous for my purpose or for any other. Without deciding the question whether a man may or may not act as he wishes — a question, in my opinion, wrongly stated — I only say that, as human activity is determined by scarcely perceptible changes in the conscience, then — it being all one, whether you do or do not recognize the so-called freedom of the will — one must be especially attentive to the state in which these almost imperceptible changes appear, as it is necessary to be especially attentive to the condition of the weights by means of which we weigh objects.

We must, as far as in us lies, try to place ourselves and others in such conditions that the clearness and delicacy of the thoughts necessary for the regular work of the conscience may not be disturbed, and not to do the

opposite by trying to make this work of the conscience more difficult and troublesome by the use of stupefying things.

A man is both a spiritual and an animal being. A man may be moved, by influencing only his spiritual nature, and may be moved by influencing his animal nature, just as a watch may be moved by a hand and by a main wheel. And just as, in a watch, it is more convenient to regulate its movement by an internal mechanism, so a man — you yourself or any one else — is more conveniently guided by his conscience. And as in watches it is necessary more than all to observe that by which the central mechanism is more conveniently moved, so in the case of a man it is more than all necessary to observe purity, clearness of conscience, whereby it is more convenient to move a man. It is impossible to doubt this, and all men know it. But the necessity arises for men to stupefy themselves. Men are not so desirous of their consciences working regularly as for it to seem to them that what they are doing is regular, and they deliberately employ such means as prevent the regular work of the conscience.

V

Men drink and smoke, not to keep their spirits up, not for gaiety's sake, not because it is pleasant, but in order to stifle conscience in themselves. And if this is so, then how terrible must be the consequences. In fact, just think what kind of a building men would build if they did not have a straight rule whereby to lay the walls, or a rectangular rule whereby to square the corners, but a soft rule which would give at all the irregularities of the wall, and a square which would bend out and in for every acute and obtuse angle!

But now by means of this self-stupefaction this very thing is done in life. Life does not fit conscience — conscience is made to yield to life. This is done in the case of individual lives, it is done also in the life of all humanity which is made up of individual lives.

In order to comprehend the full significance of such a stupefying of conscience, let any man remember carefully his spiritual state at every period of his life. Every man finds that at every period of his life before him stood certain moral questions which he has had to decide, and from the decision of which depended all the welfare of his life. For the decision of such questions great stress of attention was required. This stress of attention constitutes labor. In every labor, especially at its commencement, there is a period when the labor seems difficult, painful, but human weakness suggests the desire to shirk it. Physical labor is painful at first; still more so is intellectual labor.

As Lessing says, men have the quality of ceasing to think when thinking begins to present difficulties, and especially so, I add, when thinking begins to be fruitful. A man feels that the decision of questions facing him demands strenuous, often painful, labor, and he wants to get rid of it. If there were not internal means of stupefaction, he could not drive away from his consciousness these insistent questions, and willy-nilly he would be compelled to decide them.

Now the man knows the means of ridding himself of them whenever they present themselves, and he employs them. As soon as the questions presenting themselves for solution begin to torment him, he betakes himself to these means, and saves himself from the discomfort caused by the disturbing questions. The consciousness ceases to demand their decision, and the undecided questions remain undecided until the next period of enlightenment. But at the next period of enlightenment the same thing repeats itself, and a man for months, for years, sometimes his life long, continues to face the same moral problems, having never advanced one step toward their solution. And meantime on the decision of these moral questions the whole movement of life depends.

Something occurs analogous to what a man would do, who, needing to see the bottom through turbid water, in order to reach a precious pearl, and not liking to go

into the water, should deliberately roil the water as soon as it began to settle and become transparent. Often for a whole lifetime a man who has stupefied himself stands motionless on the same, once adopted, obscure, contradictory system of philosophy, each time the period of enlightenment approaches, beating against the same wall on which he had beaten ten, twenty years before, and finding it impossible to break through it, because he had deliberately blunted the keenness of his thoughts whereby only he could break through it. Let any one remember how he was at the epoch when he smoked and drank, and let him verify the same thing in others, and he will see one constant line of demarcation separating men who stupefy themselves from men who are free from the habit; the more a man stupefies himself, the more immovable he is morally.

VI

The effects on individuals of opium and hashish, as described for us by them, are horrible; horrible for the drunkard are the consequences of the use of alcohol, as we well know; but incomparably more horrible for society in general are the consequences of taking brandy, wine, and tobacco, though the majority of men, and especially the so-called classes of our world, use them in moderation, and consider them harmless.

The consequences must necessarily be horrible if it be granted, as one must grant, that the dominant activity of society — political, official, scientific, literary, artistic — is largely carried on by men who find themselves in an abnormal condition — by intoxicated persons.

It is ordinarily taken for granted that a man who, like the majority of the people in our well-to-do classes, uses alcoholic stimulants every time he takes food, finds himself the next day, when he goes to work, in a perfectly normal and sober state. But this is absolutely false. The man who in the evening drinks a bottle of wine, a glass of vodka, or two tankards of ale, finds him-

self in the customary condition of headachiness or depression which follows exhilaration, and therefore in a condition of intellectual debasement, which is still further increased by smoking.

For a man who constantly smokes and drinks in moderation to bring his brain into a normal condition, he must go for a week, or even more, without drinking or smoking,[1] and this rarely happens.

Thus the large part of all that is produced in our world, both by men that direct and teach others and by those directed and taught, is accomplished in a non-sober condition.

Now do not let this be taken as a jest or as an exaggeration — the ugliness, and above all the senselessness, of our lives proceed, primarily, from the constant condition of intoxication in which the majority of men find themselves. How would it be possible for men not intoxicated calmly to do all that is done in our world, from the Eiffel tower to the general war debt?

Without the slightest necessity a society is formed; capital is paid in, men work, enter into calculations, form plans; millions of work-days, millions of puds of iron, are consumed in building a tower; and millions of men consider it their duty to climb up the tower, stay there a while, and go down again; and the construction and

[1] But why are men that do not drink or smoke often found on an intellectual and moral plane incomparably lower than men that drink and smoke? And why is it that men that drink and smoke often display the very highest intellectual and moral qualities?

The answer to this is: first, we do not know the height to which smokers and drinkers might attain if they did not smoke and drink. From the fact that men of strong moral fiber, though they submit to the degrading influences of stupefying things, nevertheless produce great works, we may merely conclude that they would produce still greater ones if they did not stupefy themselves. It is very evident, as an acquaintance of mine said to me, that the works of Kant would not have been written in such a strange and execrable style if he had not smoked so much.

In the second place, we must not forget that the lower a man stands intellectually and morally, the less he is sensible of the discord between conscience and life, and therefore the less he feels the necessity of self-stupefaction; and therefore it so often happens that the most sensitive natures — those that are painfully conscious of the discord between life and conscience — fall under the influence of narcotics, and are destroyed by them. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

the visiting of this tower arouses in men's minds no criticism upon it, but only a desire to build still more tall towers. Could sober people have done such a thing?

Or again: All the European nations have been occupied for decades in devising the very best means of destroying human life, and in training all their young men that had reached mature growth how to commit murder. All know that there is no danger of a descent of barbarians, that these preparations for murder are meant by Christian and civilized nations against one another, all know that this is burdensome, painful, inconvenient, wasteful, immoral, blasphemous, and senseless — and yet all prepare for mutual murder: some, inventing political combinations as to who shall be allied with whom, and who shall be killed; others taking the command of these prospective murderers; still others submitting against their will, against the dictates of their conscience, against reason, to these murderous preparations.

Could sober men do this?

Only intoxicated men, not knowing a sober moment, could do such things, and live in such a horrible state of discord between life and conscience, as the men of our day live, not only in this, but in all other respects.

Never, it seems to me, have men lived in such evident contradiction between the demands of conscience and their acts.

The humanity of our time is, as it were, fastened to something. It is as if some external cause prevented it from taking that position which is natural to it according to its conscience. And this cause — if not the only one, at least the principal one — is the physical condition of stupefaction in which, by wine or tobacco, the immense majority of the men of our time bring themselves.

Emancipation from this terrible evil will be an epoch in the life of humanity, and this epoch is apparently at hand. The evil is recognized. The change in conscience in relation to the use of stupefying things has already taken place; men have recognized their terrible harm-

fulness and begin to point them out, and this imperceptible change in the conscience inevitably brings with it the emancipation of men from the use of stupefying things. The emancipation of men from stupefying things opens their eyes to the demands of their consciences, and they begin to lead lives in accordance with conscience.

And this is apparently beginning to take place. And, as always, it begins with the upper classes, when all the lower classes are already infected.

CHURCH AND STATE

WHAT an extraordinary thing it is! There are people who seem ready to climb out of their skins for the sake of making others accept this, and not that, form of revelation. They cannot rest till others have accepted their form of revelation, and no other. They anathematize, persecute, and kill whom they can of the dissentients. Other groups of people do the same — anathematize, persecute, and kill whom they can of the dissentients. And others again do the same. So that they are all anathematizing, persecuting, and killing — demanding that every one should believe as they do. And it results that there are hundreds of sects all anathematizing, persecuting, and killing one another.

At first I was astonished that such an obvious absurdity — such an evident contradiction — did not destroy religion itself. How can religious people remain so deluded? And really, viewed from the general, external point of view it is incomprehensible, and proves irrefragably that every religion is a fraud, and that the whole thing is superstition, as the dominant philosophy of to-day declares. And looking at things from this general point of view, I inevitably came to acknowledge that all religion is a human fraud. But I could not help pausing at the reflection that the very absurdity and obviousness of the fraud, and the fact that nevertheless all humanity yields to it, indicates that this fraud must rest on some basis that is not fraudulent. Otherwise we could not let it deceive us — it is too stupid. The very fact that all of mankind that really lives a human life yields to this fraud, obliged me to acknowledge the importance

of the phenomena on which the fraud is based. And in consequence of this reflection, I began to analyze the Christian teaching, which, for all Christendom, supplies the basis of this fraud.

That is what was apparent from the general point of view. But from the individual point of view — which shows us that each man (and I myself) must, in order to live, always have a religion show him the meaning of life — the fact that violence is employed in questions of religion is yet more amazing in its absurdity.

Indeed how can it, and why should it, concern any one to make somebody else, not merely have the same religion as himself, but also profess it in the same way as he does? A man lives, and must, therefore, know why he lives. He has established his relation to God; he knows the very truth of truths, and I know the very truth of truths. Our expression may differ; the essence must be the same — we are both of us men.

Then why should I — what can induce me to — oblige any one or demand of any one absolutely to express his truth as I express it?

I cannot compel a man to alter his religion either by violence or by cunning or by fraud — false miracles.

His religion is his life. How can I take from him his religion and give him another? It is like taking out his heart and putting another in its place. I can only do that if his religion and mine are words, and are not what gives him life; if it is a wart and not a heart. Such a thing is impossible also, because no man can deceive or compel another to believe what he does not believe; for if a man has adjusted his relation toward God and knows that religion is the relation in which man stands toward God he cannot desire to define another man's relation to God by means of force or fraud. That is impossible, but yet it is being done, and has been done everywhere and always. That is to say, it can never really be done, because it is in itself impossible; but something has been done, and is being done, that looks very much like it. What has been, and is being done, is that some people

impose on others a counterfeit of religion and others accept this counterfeit — this sham religion.

Religion cannot be forced and cannot be accepted for the sake of anything, force, fraud, or profit. Therefore what is so accepted is not religion but a fraud. And this religious fraud is a long-established condition of man's life.

In what does this fraud consist, and on what is it based? What induces the deceivers to produce it? and what makes it plausible to the deceived? I will not discuss the same phenomena in Brahminism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Mohammedanism, though any one who has read about those religions may see that the case has been the same in them as in Christianity; but I will speak only of the latter — it being the religion known, necessary, and dear to us. In Christianity, the whole fraud is built up on the fantastic conception of a Church; a conception founded on nothing, and which as soon as we begin to study Christianity amazes us by its unexpected and useless absurdity.

Of all the godless ideas and words there is none more godless than that of a Church. There is no idea which has produced more evil, none more inimical to Christ's teaching, than the idea of a Church.

In reality the word *ekklesia* means an assembly and nothing more, and it is so used in the Gospels. In the language of all modern nations the word *ekklesia* (or the equivalent word "church") means a house for prayer. Beyond that, the word has not progressed in any language, — notwithstanding the fifteen hundred years' existence of the Church-fraud. According to the definition given to the word by priests (to whom the Church-fraud is necessary) it amounts to nothing else than a preface which says: "All that I am going to say is true, and if you disbelieve I shall burn you, or denounce you, and do you all manner of harm." This conception is a sophistry, needed for certain dialectical purposes, and it has remained the possession of those to whom it is necessary. Among the people, and not only among common people, but also in society, among educated people, no

such conception is held at all, even though it is taught in the catechisms. Strange as it seems to examine this definition, one has to do so because so many people proclaim it seriously as something important, though it is absolutely false. When people say that the Church is an assembly of the true believers, nothing is really said (leaving aside the fantastic inclusion of the dead); for if I assert that the choir is an assembly of all true musicians, I have elucidated nothing unless I say what I mean by true musicians. In theology we learn that true believers are those who follow the teaching of the Church, *i.e.* belong to the Church.

Not to dwell on the fact that there are hundreds of such true Churches, this definition tells us nothing, and at first seems as useless as the definition of "choir" as the assembly of true musicians. But then we catch sight of the fox's tail. The Church is true, and it is one, and in it are pastors and flocks, and the pastors, ordained by God, teach this true and only religion. So that it amounts to saying: "By God, all that we are going to say, is all real truth." That is all. The whole fraud lies in that, — in the word and idea of a Church. And the meaning of the fraud is merely that there are people who are beside themselves with desire to teach their religion to other people.

And why are they so anxious to teach their religion to other people? If they had a real religion they would know that religion is the understanding of life, the relation each man establishes to God, and that consequently you cannot teach a religion, but only a counterfeit of religion. But they want to teach. What for? The simplest reply would be that the priest wants rolls and eggs, and the archbishop wants a palace, fishpies, and a silk cassock. But this reply is insufficient. Such is no doubt the inner, psychological motive for the deception, — that which maintains the fraud. But as it would be insufficient, when asking why one man (an executioner) consents to kill another against whom he feels no anger, — to say that the executioner kills because he thereby gets bread and

brandy and a red shirt, so it is insufficient to say that the metropolitan of Kief with his monks stuffs sacks with straw [1] and calls them relics of the saints, merely to get thirty thousand rubles a year income. The one act and the other is too terrible and too revolting to human nature for so simple and rude an explanation to be sufficient. Both the executioner and the metropolitan explaining their actions would have a whole series of arguments based chiefly on historical tradition. Men must be executed; executions have gone on since the world commenced. If I don't do it another will. I hope, by God's grace, to do it better than another would. So also the metropolitan would say: External worship is necessary; since the commencement of the world the relics of the saints have been worshiped. People respect the relics in the Kief Catacombs and pilgrims come here; I, by God's grace, hope to make the most pious use of the money thus blasphemously obtained.

To understand the religious fraud it is necessary to go to its source and origin.

We are speaking about what we know of Christianity. Turn to the commencement of Christian doctrine in the Gospels and we find a teaching which plainly excludes the external worship of God, condemning it; and which, with special clearness, positively repudiates mastership. But from the time of Christ onward we find a deviation from these principles laid down by Christ. This deviation begins from the times of the Apostles and especially from that hankerer after mastership — Paul. And the farther Christianity goes the more it deviates, and the more it adopts the methods of external worship and mastership which Christ had so definitely condemned. But in the early times of Christianity the conception of a Church was only employed to refer to all those who shared the beliefs which I consider true.

[1] The celebrated Catacombs of the Kief Monastery draw crowds of pilgrims to worship the relics of the saints. It is said that a fire once broke out in one of the chapels, and that those who hastened to save the "incorruptible body" of one of the saints discovered that the precious

That conception of the Church is quite correct if it does not include those that make a verbal expression of religion instead of its expression in the whole of life — for religion cannot be expressed in words.

The idea of a true Church was also used as an argument against dissenters. But till the time of the Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicæa, the Church was only an idea.

Since the Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicæa the Church becomes a reality, and a fraudulent reality, — that fraud of metropolitans with relics, and priests with the eucharist, Iberian Mothers of God,[1] synods, etc., which so astonish and horrify us, and which are so odious that they cannot be explained merely by the avarice of those that perpetuate them. The fraud is ancient, and was not begun merely for the profit of private individuals. No one would be such a monster of iniquity as to be the first to perpetrate it, if that were the only reason. The reasons which caused the thing to be done were evil: "By their fruits ye shall know them." The root was evil — hatred, pride, enmity against Arius and others; and another yet greater evil, the alliance of Christianity with power. Power, personified in the Emperor Constantine, who, in the heathen conception of things, stood at the summit of human greatness (he was enrolled among the gods), accepts Christianity, gives an example to all the people, converts the people, lends a helping hand against the heretics, and by means of the Ecumenical Council establishes the one true Christian religion.

The Catholic Christian religion was established for all time. It was so natural to yield to this deception that, to the present day, there are people who believe in the saving efficacy of that assembly. Yet that was the moment when a majority of Christians abandoned their religion. At that turning the great

relic was merely a bag stuffed with straw. This is only a specimen of many similar tales, some of which are true and others invented. — Tr.

[1] The Iberian Mother of God is the most celebrated of the miraculous *ikons* in Moscow. — Tr.

majority of Christians entered the heathen path, which they have followed ever since. Charlemagne and Vladimir[1] continued in the same direction.

And the Church fraud continues till now. The fraud consists in this: that the conversion of the powers-that-be to Christianity is necessary for those that understand the letter, but not the spirit, of Christianity; but the acceptance of Christianity without the abandonment of power is a satire on, and a perversion of, Christianity.

The sanctification of political power by Christianity is blasphemy; it is the negation of Christianity.

After fifteen hundred years of this blasphemous alliance of pseudo-Christianity with the State, it needs a strong effort to free oneself from all the complex sophistries by which, always and everywhere (to please the authorities), the sanctity and righteousness of State-power, and the possibility of its being Christian, has been pleaded.

In truth, the words a "Christian State" resemble the words "hot ice." The thing is either not a State using violence, or it is not Christian.

In order to understand this clearly we must forget all those fantastic notions in which we have been carefully brought up, and must ask plainly, what is the purpose of such historical and juridical science as has been taught us? Such sciences have no sound basis; their purpose is merely to supply a vindication for the use of violence.

Omitting the history of the Persians, the Medes, etc., let us take the history of that government which first formed an alliance with Christianity.

A robbers' nest existed at Rome. It grew by robbery, violence, murders, and it subdued nations. These robbers and their descendants, led by their chieftains (whom they sometimes called Cæsar, sometimes Augustus), robbed and tormented nations to satisfy their de-

[1] Vladimir adopted Christianity A.D. 988. Many inhabitants of his capital city, Kief, were disinclined to follow his example, so he "acted vigorously" (as a Russian historian remarks), *i.e.* he had the people driven into the Dniepr to be baptized. In other parts of his dominions Christianity was spread among the unwilling heathen population "by fire and sword." — TR.

sires. One of the descendants of these robber-chiefs, Constantine (a reader of books and a man satiated by an evil life), preferred certain Christian dogmas to those of the old creeds: instead of offering human sacrifices he preferred the mass; instead of the worship of Apollo, Venus, and Zeus, he preferred that of a single God with a son — Christ. So he decreed that this religion should be introduced among those that were under his power.

No one said to him: "The kings exercise authority among the nations, but among you it shall not be so. Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not lay up riches, judge not, condemn not, resist not him that is evil."

But they said to him: "You wish to be called a Christian and to continue to be the chieftain of the robbers, — to kill, burn, fight, lust, execute, and live in luxury? That can all be arranged."

And they arranged a Christianity for him, and arranged it very smoothly, better even than could have been expected. They foresaw that, reading the Gospels, it might occur to him that all this (*i.e.* a Christian life) is demanded — and not the building of temples or worshiping in them. This they foresaw, and they carefully devised such a Christianity for him as would let him continue to live his old heathen life unembarrassed. On the one hand Christ, God's Son, only came to bring salvation to him and to everybody. Christ having died, Constantine can live as he likes. More even than that, — one may repent and swallow a little bit of bread and some wine, and that will bring salvation, and all will be forgiven.

But more even than that: they sanctify his robber-chieftainship, and say that it proceeds from God, and they anoint him with holy oil. And he, on his side, arranges for them the congress of priests that they wish for, and orders them to say what each man's relation to God should be, and orders every one to repeat what they say.

And they all started repeating it, and were contented,

and now this same religion has existed for fifteen hundred years, and other robber-chiefs have adopted it, and they have all been lubricated with holy oil, and they were all, all ordained by God. If any scoundrel robs every one and slays many people, they will oil him, and he will then be from God. In Russia, Catharine II., the adulteress who killed her husband, was from God; so, in France, was Napoleon.

To balance matters the priests are not only from God, but are almost gods, because the Holy Ghost sits inside them as well as inside the Pope, and in our Synod with its commandant-officials.

And as soon as one of the anointed robber-chiefs wishes his own and another folk to begin slaying each other, the priests immediately prepare some holy water, sprinkle a cross (which Christ bore and on which he died because he repudiated such robbers), take the cross and bless the robber-chief in his work of slaughtering, hanging, and destroying.[1]

And it all might have been well if only they had been able to agree about it, and the anointed had not begun to call each other robbers, which is what they really are, and the people had not begun to listen to them and to cease to believe either in anointed people or in depositaries of the Holy Ghost, and had not learned from them to call them as they call each other, by their right names, *i.e.* robbers and deceivers.

But we have only spoken of the robbers incidentally, because it was they who led the deceivers astray. It is the deceivers, the pseudo-Christians, that we have to consider. They became such by their alliance with the robbers. It could not be otherwise. They turned from the road when they consecrated the first ruler and assured him that he, by his power, could help religion — the religion of humility, self-sacrifice, and the endurance of evil. All the history, not of the imaginary, but of the real, Church, *i.e.* of the priests under

[1] In England the holy water is not used, but an archbishop draws up a form of prayer for the success of the queen's army, and a chaplain is appointed to each regiment to teach the men Christianity. — Tr.

the sway of kings, is a series of useless efforts of these unfortunate priests to preserve the truth of the teaching while preaching it by falsehood, and while abandoning it in practice. The importance of the priesthood depends entirely on the teaching it wishes to spread; that teaching speaks of humility, self-sacrifice, love, poverty; but it is preached by violence and wrong-doing.

In order that the priesthood should have something to teach and that they should have disciples, they cannot get rid of the teaching. But in order to whitewash themselves and justify their immoral alliance with power, they have, by all the cunningest devices possible, to conceal the essence of the teaching, and for this purpose they have to shift the center of gravity from what is essential in the teaching to what is external. And this is what is done by the priesthood — this is the source of the sham religion taught by the Church. The source is the alliance of the priests (calling themselves the Church) with the powers-that-be, *i.e.* with violence. The source of their desire to teach a religion to others lies in the fact that true religion exposes them, and they want to replace true religion by a fictitious religion arranged to justify their deeds.

True religion may exist anywhere except where it is evidently false, *i.e.* violent; it cannot be a State religion.

True religion may exist in all the so-called sects and heresies, only it surely cannot exist where it is joined to a State using violence. Curiously enough the names "Orthodox-Greek," "Catholic," or "Protestant" religion, as those words are commonly used, mean nothing but "religion allied to power," — State religion and therefore false religion.

The idea of a Church as a union of many — of the majority — in one belief and in nearness to the source of the teaching, was in the first two centuries of Christianity merely one feeble external argument in favor of the correctness of certain views. Paul said, "I know from Christ Himself." Another said, "I know from Luke." And all said, "We think rightly, and the proof that we

are right is that we are a big assembly, *ekklesia*, the Church." But only beginning with the Council of Nicæa, organized by an emperor, does the Church become a plain and tangible fraud practised by some of the people who professed this religion.

They began to say, "It has pleased us and the Holy Ghost." The "Church" no longer meant merely a part of a weak argument, it meant *power* in the hands of certain people. It allied itself with the rulers, and began to act like the rulers. And all that united itself with power and submitted to power, ceased to be a religion and became a fraud.

What does Christianity teach, understanding it as the teaching of any or of all the churches?

Examine it as you will, compound it or divide it, — the Christian teaching always falls with two sharply separated parts. There is the teaching of dogmas: from the divine Son, the Holy Ghost, and the relationship of these persons, — to the eucharist with or without wine, and with leavened or with unleavened bread; and there is the moral teaching: of humility, freedom from covetousness, purity of mind and body, forgiveness, freedom from bondage, peacefulness. Much as the doctors of the Church have labored to mix these two sides of the teachings, they have never mingled, but like oil and water have always remained apart in larger or smaller circles.

The difference of the two sides of the teaching is clear to every one, and all can see the fruits of the one and of the other in the life of men, and by these fruits can conclude which side is the more important, and (if one may use the comparative form) more true. One looks at the history of Christendom from this aspect, and one is horror-struck. Without exception, from the very beginning and to the very end, till to-day, look where one will, examine what dogma you like, — from the dogma of the divinity of Christ, to the manner of making the sign of the cross,[1] and to the question of

[1] One of the main points of divergence between the "Old-believers" and the "Orthodox" Russian church was whether in making the sign of the cross two fingers or three should be extended. — Tr.

serving the communion with or without wine, — the fruit of mental labors to explain the dogmas has always been envy, hatred, executions, banishments, slaughter of women and children, burnings and tortures. Look on the other side, the moral teaching from the going into the wilderness to commune with God, to the practice of supplying food to those who are in prison; the fruits of it are all our conceptions of goodness, all that is joyful, comforting, and that serves as a beacon to us in history. ....

People before whose eyes the fruits of the one and other side of Christianity were not yet evident, might be misled and could hardly help being misled. And people might be misled who were sincerely drawn into disputes about dogmas, not noticing that by such disputes they were serving not God but the devil, not noticing that Christ said plainly that He came to destroy all dogmas; those also might be led astray who had inherited a traditional belief in the importance of these dogmas, and had received such a perverse mental training that they could not see their mistake; and again, those ignorant people might be led astray to whom these dogmas seemed nothing but words or fantastic notions. But we to whom the simple meaning of the Gospels — repudiating all dogmas — is evident, we before whose eyes are the fruits of these dogmas in history, cannot be so misled. History is for us a means — even a mechanical means — of verifying the teaching.

Is the dogma of the Immaculate Conception necessary or not? What has come of it? Hatred, abuse, irony. And did it bring any benefit? None at all.

Was the teaching that the adulteress should not be sentenced necessary or not? What has come of it? Thousands and thousands of times people have been softened by that recollection.

Again, does everybody agree about any one of the dogmas? No. Do people agree that it is good to give to him that has need? Yes, all agree.

But the one side, the dogmas — about which every one

disagrees, and which no one requires — is what the priesthood gave out, and still gives out, under the name of religion; while the other side, about which all can agree, and which is necessary to all, and which saves people, is the side which the priesthood, though they have not dared to reject it, have also not dared to set forth as a teaching, for that teaching repudiates them.

Religion is the meaning we give to our lives, it is that which gives strength and direction to our life. Every one that lives finds such a meaning, and lives on the basis of that meaning. If man finds no meaning in life, he dies. In this search man uses all that the previous efforts of humanity have supplied. And what humanity has reached we call revelation. Revelation is what helps man to understand the meaning of life.

Such is the relation in which man stands toward religion.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR

This article is prohibited in Russia, and, though written several years ago, has never been printed in Russian.

I once asked Tolstoï about this article, in which it seemed to me that the truth was told somewhat roughly and even harshly. He explained that it was a rough draft of an article he had planned but had not brought into satisfactory shape. After it had been put aside for some time, in favor of other work, a friend borrowed it and took a copy, and it began to circulate from hand to hand in written or hectographed form. Tolstoï does not regret the publicity thus obtained for the article, as it expresses something which he feels to be true and important.

A translation, made probably from an incorrect copy, or from the French, has already appeared in English, but a retranslation is not the less wanted on that account. A little book, professing to be by Count L. Tolstoï, and entitled "Vicious Pleasures" (a title Tolstoï never used) was published in London some years ago. It consisted of translations, or perhaps I should rather say parodies, of five essays by Tolstoï. But, to borrow from Macaulay, they were translated much as Bottom was in "Midsummer Night's Dream" when he had an ass's head on. In many places it is impossible to make out what the essays mean. One does not even know whether it is the Church or the State, or both, that are "Vicious Pleasures."

The translator evidently had some qualms of conscience, for he concludes his preface with the words: "If fault be found with the present translator for the manner in which he has reproduced Count

Tolstoï's work in English, he would ask his critics to remember that he too, like Kant, dearly loves his pipe."

If that be really the explanation of the quality of the work, — "Vicious Pleasures" should be of value to the anti-tobacco league — as a fearful warning. Excepting for that purpose I doubt whether it can be of use to any one.

The present version will, I hope, be found intelligible by those who approach it with an open mind.

HOW TO READ THE GOSPELS

THERE is so much that is strange, improbable, unintelligible, and even contradictory in what professes to be Christ's teaching that people do not know how to understand it.

It is very differently understood by different people. Some say redemption is the all-important matter. Others say the all-important thing is grace, obtainable through the sacraments. Others, again, say that submission to the Church is what is really essential. But the Churches themselves disagree, and interpret the teaching variously. The Roman Catholic Church holds that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son; that the Pope is infallible, and that salvation is obtainable chiefly through works. The Lutheran Church does not accept this, and considers that faith is what is chiefly needed for salvation. The Orthodox Russo-Greek Church considers that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only, and that both works and faith are necessary to salvation.

And the Anglican and other Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, not to mention hundreds of other Churches, interpret Christ's teaching each in its own way.

Young men, and men of the people, doubting the truth of the Church-teaching in which they have been brought up, often come to me and ask what *my* teaching is, and how *I* understand Christ's teaching? Such questions always grieve, and even shock me.

Christ, who the Churches say was God, came on earth to reveal divine truth to men, for their guidance in life. A man — even a plain, stupid man — if he wants to

give people guidance of importance to them, will manage to impart it so that they can make out what he means. And is it possible that God, having come on earth especially to save people, was not able to say what He wanted to say clearly enough to prevent people from misinterpreting His words, and from disagreeing with one another about them?

This could not be so if Christ were God; nor even if Christ were not God, but merely a great teacher, is it possible that He failed to express Himself clearly. For a great teacher is great, just because he is able to express the truth so that it can neither be hidden nor obscured, but is as plain as daylight.

In either case, therefore, the Gospels which transmit Christ's teaching must contain truth. And, indeed, the truth is there for all who will read the Gospels with a sincere wish to know the truth, without prejudice, and, above all, without supposing that the Gospels contain some special sort of wisdom beyond human reason.

That is how I read the Gospels, and I found in them truth plain enough for little children to understand, as, indeed, the Gospels themselves say. So that when I am asked what *my* teaching consists in, and how *I* understand Christ's teaching, I reply: I have no teaching, but I understand Christ's teaching as it is explained in the Gospels. If I have written books about Christ's teaching, I have done so only to show the falseness of the interpretations given by the commentators on the Gospels.

To understand Christ's real teaching the chief thing is not to interpret the Gospels, but to understand them as they are written. And, therefore, to the question how Christ's teaching should be understood, I reply: If you wish to understand it, read the Gospels. Read them putting aside all foregone conclusions; read with the sole desire to understand what is said there. But just because the Gospels are holy books, read them considerately, reasonably, and with discernment, and not at haphazard or mechanically, as if all the words were of equal weight.

To understand any book one must choose out the parts that are quite clear, dividing them from what is obscure or confused. And from what is clear we must form our idea of the drift and spirit of the whole work. Then, on the basis of what we have understood, we may proceed to make out what is confused or not quite intelligible. That is how we read all kinds of books. And it is particularly necessary thus to read the Gospels, which have passed through such a multiplicity of compilations, translations, and transcriptions, and were composed, eighteen centuries ago, by men who were not highly educated, and were superstitious.[1]

Therefore, in order to understand the Gospels, we must first of all separate what is quite simple and intelligible from what is confused and unintelligible, and afterward read this clear and intelligible part several times over, trying fully to assimilate it. Then, helped by the comprehension of the general meaning, we can try to explain to ourselves the drift of the parts which seemed involved and obscure. That was how I read the Gospels, and the meaning of Christ's teachings became so clear to me that it was impossible to have any doubts about it. And I advise every one who wishes to understand the true meaning of Christ's teaching to follow the same plan.

Let each man when reading the Gospels select all that seems to him quite plain, clear, and comprehensible, and let him score it on the margin, say with a blue pencil, and then, taking the marked passages first, let him separate Christ's words from those of the Evan-

[1] The Gospels, as is known to all who have studied their origin, far from being infallible expressions of divine truth, are the work of innumerable minds and hands, and are full of errors. Therefore the Gospels can in no case be taken as a production of the Holy Ghost, as Churchmen assert. Were that so, God would have revealed the Gospel as he is said to have revealed the commandments on Mount Sinai; or he would have transmitted the complete book to men, as the Mormons declare was the case with their holy scriptures. But we know how these works were written and collected, and how they were corrected and translated; and therefore not only can we not accept them as infallible revelations, but we must, if we respect truth, correct errors that we find in them. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

gelists by marking Christ's words a second time with, say, a red pencil. Then let him read over these doubly scored passages several times. Only after he has thoroughly assimilated these, let him again read the other words attributed to Christ, which he did not understand when he first read them, and let him score, in red, those that have become plain to him. Let him leave unscored such words of Christ as remain quite unintelligible, and also unintelligible words by the writers of the Gospels. The passages marked in red will supply the reader with the essence of Christ's teaching. They will give what all men need, and what Christ therefore said, in a way which all can understand. The places marked only in blue will give what the authors of the Gospels said that is intelligible.

Very likely in selecting what is, from what is not, fully comprehensible, people will not all mark the same passages. What is comprehensible to me may seem obscure to another. But all will certainly agree in what is most important, and there are things which will be found quite intelligible to every one.

It is just this — just what is fully comprehensible to all men — that constitutes the essence of Christ's teaching.[1]

[1] This little article — advising men how to read the Gospels most profitably — is, of course, not allowed to be published in Russia. Hectographed and photographed copies do, however, circulate from hand to hand. — Tr.

REASON AND RELIGION

TO those who ask my opinion whether it be desirable to endeavor by the aid of reason to attain complete consciousness in one's inner spiritual life, and to express the truths thus attained in definite language, I would answer positively in the affirmative, that every man, in order to achieve his destiny on earth, and to attain true welfare, — the two are synonymous, — must continually exert all his mental faculties to solve for himself and clearly to express the religious foundations on which he lives — that is, the meaning of his life.

I have often found among illiterate laborers who have to deal with cubic measurements an accepted conviction that mathematical calculations are fallacious, and not to be trusted. Whether it arise from their ignorance of arithmetic, or from the fact that those responsible for the calculations have often cheated them, with or without intent, the conviction that mathematics is unreliable and worthless for purposes of measurement has taken root amongst illiterate workmen, and become for the majority of them an unquestioned fact.

The similar opinion has obtained amongst men, — I will boldly say, lacking in true religious feelings, — that reason is unequal to the solution of religious questions, that the application of reason to such questions is the most fruitful source of error, and that the solution of such questions by the aid of reason is sinful pride.

I mention this because the doubt expressed in the question whether it be needful to strive for distinct consciousness in one's religious convictions may be merely the outcome of the belief that reason cannot be applied to the solution of religious questions.

Man has been given by God one single instrument to

attain knowledge of self and of one's relation to the universe; there is no other, and that one is reason.

Yet he is informed that he may use his reason to solve questions, whether domestic, family, commercial, political, scientific, artistic, but not for the elucidation of the problem for which especially it was given him; and that for the solution of the most important truths, of those on an acquaintance with which hangs all his life, man must on no account employ his reason, but must acquiesce in their truth independently of his reason, whereas, independently of reason, man cannot be conscious of anything.

It is said, Accept the truth by revelation, by faith; but a man cannot believe independently of reason. If a man believes this and not that, it is only because his reason tells him that this is credible, and that is not. To affirm that a man must not be guided by reason is equivalent to telling a man who has lost his way in dark catacombs that, in order to find his way out, he must extinguish his lamp, and be guided, not by light, but by something else.

But it may be objected that not every one is endowed with intellect and a special capacity for expressing his thoughts, and that, in consequence, an inadequate expression of these thoughts may lead to error.

To this I would apply the words of the Gospel, — that "things hid from the wise and prudent have been revealed unto babes." And this statement is neither an exaggeration nor a paradox, as people are accustomed to view such passages in the Gospels as do not please them, but is an assertion of the simplest and most indubitable truth that unto everything in the universe is given a law which this being must follow, and that to enable each to recognize this law every one is endowed with corresponding organs. Thus every man is endowed with reason, and to the reason of every man is disclosed the law which he must follow. This law is concealed only from those who do not wish to follow it, and who, in order to avoid it, cast reason aside, and instead of using it to become acquainted with truth, accept upon

trust the assertions of those who, like them, have surrendered reason.

Yet the law which men should follow is so plain that it is accessible to every child, the more so as no man has to discover anew the law of his life. Those who have lived before him have discovered and expressed it, and he has but to verify it with his reason, and to accept or refuse those propositions which he finds expressed in tradition; that is, not, as recommended by those who would shirk the law, by verifying reason by tradition, but, on the contrary, by verifying tradition by reason.

Traditions may proceed from men, and be false; but reason indubitably comes from God, and cannot be false. Hence for the recognition and expression of truth no special extraordinary capacity is required; one has but to believe that reason is not only the loftiest sacred capacity of man, but moreover is the sole instrument for the understanding of truth.

Particular intellectual qualities are needful, not for the acquirement and expression of truth, but for the concoction and expression of error. Having once deviated from the directions of reason, distrusting it, and believing what others proclaimed as the truth, men accumulate and accept by faith — for the most part in the form of laws, revelations, dogmas — such intricate, unnatural, and contradictory propositions, that, in order to express them and adapt them to life, great acuteness of mind and special qualities are indeed required.

Only imagine a man of our world, educated on the religious basis of any of the Christian confessions, — Catholic, Greek-Orthodox, Protestant, — who wished to elucidate for himself and adapt to his life the religious fundamental ideas with which he has been inoculated in childhood! What an involved mental labor he must face in order to reconcile all the contradictions included in the faith he has imbibed from his youth.

A righteous God has created evil, persecutes men, demands redemption, and so forth; and we, confessing the law of love and mercy, make war, rob the poor, etc.

In order to disentangle these impossible contradic-

tions, or rather in order to conceal them from oneself, much mental capacity and special talent is indeed necessary; but in order to learn the law of one's life, or, as already expressed, to bring one's faith into complete consciousness, no special mental capacity is required; one has but to refuse to admit anything contrary to reason, not to deny reason, religiously to guard one's reason, and to rely on it alone.

If the meaning of life is obscure to any one, one must not therefore conclude that reason is unequal to elucidating that meaning, but merely that too much of what is unreasonable has been admitted upon faith, and that everything uncorroborated by reason must be set aside.

Hence my answer to the question, whether one should try to attain complete consciousness in one's inner spiritual life, is, that this is precisely the most needful and important business of our lives. Most needful and important, because the only reasonable conception of life is the accomplishment of the will of Him who sent us into the world — that is, the will of God. And His will is revealed to us, not by any extraordinary miracle, nor by the divine finger inscribing it on stone, nor by the Holy Ghost composing an infallible book, nor by the infallibility of any special holy person or collection of persons, but by the working of the reason of all men, who pass on to each other by word and deed the truths which are ever becoming more evident to their consciousness.

This knowledge never has been, and never will be, complete, but augments continually as the life of mankind advances. The longer we live the more clearly and fully do we learn the will of God, and in consequence what we must do to fulfil it.

Therefore, I am firmly convinced that the elucidation and verbal expression (which is an unmistakable token of clearness of idea) of all religious truth accessible to him by every man, however small he may think himself or others may consider him — the least being essentially the greatest — are of the most sacred and most essential duties of man.

FIRST RECOLLECTIONS

FROM UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA

HERE are my first recollections (which I cannot reduce to order, not knowing what came first, what afterward, while of some I know not whether they were dreams or reality). But here they are.

I am tied down; I want to raise my arms, but I cannot do it, and I wail and weep and my cry is disagreeable to myself; but I cannot stop. It must be that some one stands bending over me, but I don't remember who. And all this takes place in a semi-darkness. But I remember that there are two. My crying has an effect on them, they are alarmed at my cry, but they do not unloose me as I wish, and I cry louder than ever. It seems to them necessary (that is, that I be tied down), while I know that it is not necessary, and I want to prove it to them, and I burst out into a cry disgusting to myself but unrestrainable.

I am conscious of the injustice and cruelty, not of people, because they pity me, but of fate, and feel pity for myself. I do not know and never shall learn what this was: whether they swaddled me when I was a suckling and I pulled out my hands; or whether they swaddled me when I was more than a year old so that I might not scratch the tetter; or whether I have gathered many impressions into one as happens in dreams, — but apparently this was my first and most powerful impression of life. And it was not my crying or my suffering that I retain in my recollection, but the complication, the contradiction, of the impression. I wanted freedom;

it would not disturb any one, and I who needed the strength was weak while they were strong.

The second impression was pleasurable. I am sitting in a tub, and I am surrounded by a new and disagreeable odor of some object by which my small body is galled. Apparently this was bran, and apparently in the water and in the trough, but the novelty of the impression made by the bran awakened me, and I for the first time noticed and observed my little body, with the ribs plainly outlined, and the smooth, dark tub, and the nurse with her arms tucked up, and the dark, warm, threatening water, and the swash of it, and especially the feeling of smoothness of the wet edges of the tub when I put my little hands on it. Strange and terrible to think that from my birth up to my third year, all the time while I was nursing, while I was weaned, when I was beginning to creep, to walk, to speak, however I rack my memory, I can find no impression except these two.

When did I begin? When did I begin to live? And why is it pleasant to imagine myself as I was then, but it used to be terrible to me, as now it is terrible to many, to imagine myself as I shall be when I again enter into that condition of death from which there will be no recollections expressible in words? Was I not alive when I was learning to look, to hear, to understand, to talk, when I slept, when I pressed my lips to my mother's breast, and laughed and rejoiced my mother? I was alive and blissfully alive. Did I not then get all that whereby I live now, and get in such abundance, and so rapidly, that in all the rest of my life I have not got a hundredth part so much?

From a five-year-old child to me is only a step. From the new-born baby to the five-year-old child there is a terrible gap. From the embryo to the new-born baby there is an abyss. And from non-existence to the embryo there is not an abyss, but incomprehensibility. Moreover space and time and cause are forms of thought and the existence of life outside of these forms, but all our life is a continually increasing subjection to these forms and then again emancipation from them.

The following recollections of mine refer to my fourth and fifth years, but even of these there are very few, and not one of these refers to life outside of the walls of my home.

Nature up to the age of five does not exist for me. All that I remember refers to bed and chamber. No grass, no leaves, no sky, no sun exist for me. It cannot be that they did not let me play with the flowers and leaves, or see the grass, that they did not protect me from the sun, but up to five years, up to six years, there is not one recollection of what we call Nature. Apparently it is necessary to go away from her in order to see her, and I was Nature!

The recollection that comes after that of the tub is that of *Yeremeyevna*. "Yeremeyevna" was a word with which they used to frighten us children. And apparently they began early to frighten us with it, but my recollection of it is as follows:—

I am in my little bed and feeling good and happy as always, and I should not remember this but suddenly my nurse, or some one of those that constituted my life, says something in a voice entirely new to me, and goes out, and I begin to feel a sensation of terror besides that of gaiety. And I remember that I am not alone, but some one is there with me very much the same as I.

This must have been my sister Mashenka, a year younger than I, for our beds stood in one room together.

And I remember that there is a canopy over my bed, and my sister and I used to share our pleasures and terrors — whatever unexpected thing happened to us — and I used to hide in the pillow, and I would hide and peek out to look at the door from which I expected anything new and gay. And we used to laugh and hide and be full of expectations. And here comes some one in a gown and head-dress such as I had never seen before, but I know that it is the person who is always with me — a nurse or auntie, I don't know which, and this some one speaks in a deep voice which I recognize, and says something terrible about naughty children, and about

Yeremeyevna! I squeal with terror and delight, and I am terrified, and at the same time delighted because I am terrified, and I wish that the one who frightened me did not know that I know her! We become silent, but soon again we begin to whisper on purpose to bring back Yeremeyevna.

Similar to the recollection of Yeremeyevna is another, apparently later in time because it is more distinct, but it always remains incomprehensible to me. In this remembrance the chief rôle is played by a German, Feodor Ivanovitch, our teacher; but I know assuredly that I was not as yet under his supervision, consequently this must have taken place before I was five. And this is my first impression of Feodor Ivanovitch. And it happens so early that I do not remember any one — my brothers, nor my father, nor any one. If I have an idea of any person whatever besides, it is only of my sister, and solely because she and I were associated in terror of Yeremeyevna.

With this recollection is connected also my first conception that our house had an upper story. How I got there, whether I went there by myself or who took me there, I do not remember at all; I only remember that there were several of us, we all took hold of hands in a khorovod; among those holding one another by the hand were several strange women, — because I recollect that these were the laundry girls, — and we all began to turn and spring, and Feodor Ivanovitch capered about, lifting his legs very high and making a terrible noise and thumping, and I had a consciousness that this was not the right thing to do, that it was bad, and I noticed him and I seemed to burst out crying, and it all came to an end.

This is all I remember up to my fifth year. I remember nothing of my nurses, my aunties, my brothers, my sisters, or of my father, or my rooms, or my toys — nothing at all. My recollections grow more definite from the time when I was taken down to Feodor Ivanovitch and to the older boys.

When I was taken down to Feodor Ivanovitch and

the other boys, I experienced, for the first time, and therefore more strongly than ever again, the feeling called the sense of duty, called the sense of the cross, which every man is called upon to wear. I felt sorry to leave what I had grown accustomed to — accustomed to from eternity! — I felt melancholy, poetically melancholy to leave, not so much the people, my sister, my nurse, my aunt, as the bed, the canopy, the pillows; and the new life into which I had entered was terrible to me. I tried to find something cheerful in the new life which was before me; I tried to credit the flattering speeches with which Feodor Ivanovitch allured me to himself. I tried not to see the scorn with which the boys received me, their younger brother; I tried to think that it was disgraceful for a big boy to live with girls, and that there was nothing good in the up-stair life with the nurse; but in the depths of my soul I was terribly homesick, and I knew that I had irrevocably lost my innocence and joy, and only a feeling of personal dignity, a consciousness that I was doing my duty, sustained me.

Many times since in life it has been my fortune to undergo such moments at the dividing of the ways, where new paths opened out before me. I experienced a gentle grief at the irrevocableness of what was lost. And still I did not believe that it would be. Though they told me that I was to be taken down to the boys, I remember that my khalat with its belt, sewed to the back, which they put on me, seemed to separate me forever from the upper rooms, and I now, for the first time, noticed others besides those with whom I had lived upstairs, but the chief personage was the one at whose house I was living and whom I do not remember before. This was my Aunt T—— A——.[1] I remember her as short, stout, with black hair, kind, affectionate, gentle. She put on me my khalat, tightened the belt and fastened it, kissed me, and I saw that she was experiencing the same feelings as I was, that she was sorry, awfully sorry, but it had to be.

[1] Probably Tatyana Aleksandreyevna Eyelskaya.

For the first time I realized that life is not play, but hard work. Not otherwise shall I feel when I come to die; I shall discover that death or the future life is not play, but hard work.

May 17, 1878.

THE DEMANDS OF LOVE

AN EXTRACT FROM TOLSTOÏ'S DIARY

YESTERDAY, 24th June, 1893, I thought: — Let us imagine people of the affluent class (for clearness' sake say a man and a woman: husband and wife, brother and sister, father and daughter, or mother and son) who have vividly realized the sin of a luxurious and idle life, lived amidst people crushed by work and want. They have left the town; have handed over to others (or in some way rid themselves of) their superfluities; have left themselves stocks and shares yielding, say, £15 a year for the two of them (or have even left themselves nothing), and are earning their living by some craft, say, *e.g.*, by painting on china or translating first-rate books, and are living in the country, in a Russian village.

Having hired or bought themselves a hut, they cultivate their plot of ground or garden, look after their bees, and at the same time give medical assistance (as far as their knowledge allows) to the villagers, teach the children, and write letters and petitions for their neighbors, etc.

One would think no kind of life could be better. But this life will be hell, or will become hell, if these people are not hypocrites and do not lie, *i.e.* if they are really sincere.

If these people have renounced the advantages and pleasures of life which town and money gave them, they have done so only because they acknowledge men to be brothers — equals before their Father. Not equals in

ability, or, if you please, in worth; but equals in their right to life, and to all that life can give.

It may be possible to doubt the equality of people when we look at adults, each with a different past, but doubt becomes impossible when we see children. Why should this boy have watchful care and all the assistance knowledge can give to assist his physical and mental development, while that other charming child, of equal or better promise, is to become rickety, crippled, or dwarfed from lack of milk, and to grow up illiterate, wild, hampered by superstitions, a man representing merely so much brute labor-power?

Surely, if people have left town life, and have settled, as these have, to live in the village, it is only because they, not in words only, but in very truth, believe in the brotherhood of man, and intend, if not to realize it, at least to begin realizing it in their lives. And just this attempt to realize it must, if they are sincere, inevitably bring them to a terrible position.

With their habits (formed from childhood upwards) of order, comfort, and especially of cleanliness, they, on moving to the village, after buying or hiring a hut, cleared it of insects, perhaps even papered it themselves, and installed some remains, not luxurious but necessary, of their furniture, say an iron bedstead, a cupboard, and a writing-table. And so they begin living. At first the folk shun them, expecting them (like other rich people) to defend their advantages by force, and therefore do not approach them with requests and demands. But presently, bit by bit, the disposition of the newcomers gets known; they themselves offer disinterested services, and the boldest and most impudent of the villagers find out practically that these newcomers do not refuse to give, and that one can get something out of them.

Thereupon, all kinds of demands on them begin to spring up, and constantly increase.

A process begins comparable to the subsidence and running down to a level of the grains in a heap. They settle down till there is no longer any heap rising above the average level.

Besides the begging, natural demands to divide up what they have more than others possess make themselves heard, and, apart from these demands, the new settlers themselves, being always in close touch with the village folk, feel the inevitable necessity of giving from their superfluity to those who are in extreme poverty. And not only do they feel the need of giving away their superfluity until they have only as much left as each one (say as the average man) ought to have; there is no possible definition of this "average" — no way of measuring the amount which each one should have; there is no stopping, for crying want is always around them, and they have a surplus compared to this destitution.

It seems necessary to keep a glass of milk; but Matrena has two unweaned babies, who can find no milk in their mother's breast, and a two-year-old child which is on the verge of starving. They might keep a pillow and a blanket, so as to sleep as usual after a busy day; but a sick man is lying on a coat full of lice, and freezes at night, being covered only with bark-matting. They would have kept tea and food, but had to give it to some old pilgrims who were exhausted. At least it seemed right to keep the house clean, but beggar-boys came and were allowed to spend the night, and again lice bred, after one had just got rid of those picked up during a visit to the sick man.

Where and how can one stop? Only those will find a point to stop at who are either strangers to that feeling of the reality of the brotherhood of men which has brought these people to the village, or who are so accustomed to lie that they no longer notice the difference between truth and falsehood. The fact is, no point of stoppage exists; and if such a limit be found, it only proves that the feeling which prompted these people's act was imaginary or feigned.

I continue to imagine these people's life.

Having worked all day, they return home; having no longer a bed or a pillow, they sleep on some straw they have collected, and after a supper of bread they

lie down to sleep. It is autumn. Rain is falling, mixed with snow. Some one knocks at the door. Should they open it? A man enters wet and feverish. What must they do? Let him have the dry straw? There is no more dry, so either they must drive away the sick man, or let him, wet as he is, lie on the floor, or give him the straw, and themselves (since one must sleep) share it with him.

But this is still not all: a man comes who is a drunkard and a debauchee, whom you have helped several times, and who has always drunk whatever you gave him.

He comes now, his jaw trembling, and asks for six shillings to replace money he has stolen and drunk, for which he will be imprisoned, if he does not replace it. You say you only have eight shillings, which you want for a payment due to-morrow. Then the man says: "Yes, I see, you talk, but when it comes to acts, you're like the rest; you let the man you call a 'brother' perish, rather than suffer yourselves!"

How is one to act in such cases? Let the fever-stricken man have the damp floor and lie in the dry place oneself, —and you will be farther from sleep than the other way. If you put him on your straw and lie near him, you will get lice and typhus. If you give the beggar six of your last shillings, you will be left without bread to-morrow; but to refuse means, as he said, to turn from that for the sake of which one lives.

If you can stop here, why could you not stop sooner? Why need you help people? Why give up your property and leave the town? Where can one draw the line? If there is a limit to the work you are doing, then it all has no meaning, or it has only the horrible meaning of hypocrisy.

How is one to act? What is one to do? Not to draw back means to lose one's life, to be eaten by lice, to starve, to die, and — apparently — uselessly. To stop is to repudiate that for the sake of which one has acted, for which one has done whatever of good one has accomplished. And one cannot repudiate it, for it is no inven-

tion of mine, or of Christ's, that we are brothers and must serve one another; it is real fact, and when it has once entered, you cannot tear that consciousness out of the heart of man. How is one to act? Is there no escape?

Let us imagine that these people, not dismayed by the necessity of sacrifice which brought them to a position inevitably leading to death, decided that the position arose from their having come to help the villagers with means too scanty for the work, and that the result would have been different, and they would have done great good, had they possessed more money. Let us imagine that they find resources, collect immense sums of money, and begin to help. Within a few weeks the same thing will repeat itself. Very soon all their means, however great they may be, will have flowed into the pits formed by poverty, and the position will be the same as before.

But perhaps there is a third way? Some people say there is, and that it consists in assisting the enlightenment of the masses, and that this will destroy inequality.

But this path is too evidently hypocritical; you cannot enlighten a population which is constantly on the verge of perishing from want. And, moreover, the insincerity of people who preach this is evident from the fact that a man eager for the realization of equality (even through science) could not live a life the whole structure of which supported inequality.

But there is yet a fourth way: that of aiding the destruction of the causes which produce inequality — aiding in the destruction of *force* which produces it.

And that way of escape must occur to all sincere people who try in their lives to carry into effect their consciousness of the brotherhood of man.

The people I have pictured to myself would say: "If we cannot live here among these people in the village; if we are placed in the terrible position that we must necessarily starve, be eaten by lice, and die a slow death, or repudiate the sole moral basis of our lives, this is because some people store up accumulations of wealth while others are destitute; this inequality is based on

force; and therefore, since the root of the matter is force, we must contend against force!"

Only by the destruction of force, and of the slavery which results from force, can a service of man become possible which will not necessarily lead to the sacrifice of life itself.

But how is force to be destroyed? Where is it? It is in the soldiers, in the police, in magistrates, and in the lock which fastens my door. How can I strive against it? Where, and in what?

We even find people, revolutionists, who strive against force, while they depend altogether on force to maintain their own lives — fighting force by force.

But for a sincere man this is not possible. To fight force by force means merely to replace the old violence by a new one. To help by "culture," founded on force, is to do the same. To collect money, obtained by violence, and to use it in aid of people impoverished by force, means to heal by violence wounds inflicted by violence.

Even in the case I imagined: not to admit a sick man to my hut and to my bed, and not to give six shillings because I can, by force, retain them, is also to use force. Therefore, in our society, the struggle against force does not, for him who would live in brotherhood, eliminate the necessity of yielding up his life, of being eaten by lice and dying, while at the same time always striving against violence; preaching non-resistance, exposing violence, and above all giving an example of non-resistance and of self-sacrifice.

Dreadful and difficult as is the position of a man living the Christian life, amidst lives of violence, he has no path but that of struggle and sacrifice — and sacrifice till the end.

One must realize the gulf that separates the lousy, famished millions from the overfed people who trim their dresses with lace; and to fill it up we need sacrifices, and not the hypocrisy with which we now try to hide from ourselves the depth of the gulf.

A man may lack the strength to throw himself into

the gulf, but it cannot be escaped by any man who seeks after life. We may be unwilling to go into it, but let us be honest about it, and say so, and not deceive ourselves with hypocritical pretences.

And, after all, the gulf is not so terrible. Or, if it is terrible, yet the horrors which await us in a worldly way of life are more terrible still.

News reached us lately, correct or not (for in such cases people are apt to exaggerate), that Admiral Tryon for honor's sake (the "honor" of a fleet designed for murder) declined to save himself and persisted like a hero (like a fool rather) with his ship.

There is less danger of death from lice, infection, or want after giving away one's last crust to help others, than there is of being killed at the manœuvers or in war.

Lice, black bread, and want seem so terrible. But the bottom of the pit of want is not so deep after all, and we are often like the boy who clung by his hands in terror all night to the edge of the well into which he had stumbled, fearing the depth and the water he supposed to be there, while a foot below him was the dry bottom. Yet we must not trust to that bottom, we must go forward prepared to die. Only *that* is real love, which knows no limit to sacrifices — even unto death.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Tolstoï keeps a diary in which he notes down what he has been thinking. Much of this diary is hastily written and unsatisfactory to Tolstoï himself, so that he frequently inserts such remarks as: "these thoughts are confused and need restating," or "this is nonsense," etc. But the diary contains much that is valuable, and Tolstoï has yielded to a friend's request to be allowed to make extracts for publication. "The Demands of Love" is a good example of one of the longest and most finished passages.

On a first perusal this extract has a depressing effect on most readers. But is it not true that, looking at the matter objectively — as a problem outside ourselves — we can imagine no position in which one would be justified in stopping and refusing to go farther along the path of self-abnegation? Judged by the demands of love we are all sinners, even the best must say: "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, even God."

Considering the matter subjectively, as a question of personal conduct, surely we may, however, walk the path of progress, humbly confessing our sins and shortcomings. It is right to continue to move toward a perfection we shall not reach here.

Viewing other aspects of life, Tolstoï would be one of the last to denounce as "hypocritical" the feeble efforts of imperfect men to live better than before. "The bruised reed he would not break, the smoking flax he would not quench." But here he is showing how the evils of our social state rest on the use of violence between man and man, and that the struggle to right this wrong calls for absolute self-sacrifice, even unto death. To be contented with what we have attained to and to stagnate is never right.

THREE PARABLES

I

PARABLE THE FIRST

A WEED had spread over a beautiful meadow. And in order to get rid of it the tenants of the meadow mowed it, but the weed only increased in consequence. And now the kind, wise master came to visit the tenants of the meadow, and among the other good counsels which he gave them, he told them they ought not to mow the weed, since that only made it grow the more luxuriantly, but that they must pull it up by the roots.

But either because the tenants of the meadow did not, amongst the other prescriptions of the good master, take heed of his advice not to mow down the weed, but to pull it up, or because they did not understand him, or because, according to their calculations, it seemed foolish to obey, the result was that his advice not to mow the weed but to pull it up was not followed, just as if he had never proffered it, and the men went on mowing the weed and spreading it.

And although, during the succeeding years, there were men that reminded the tenants of the meadow of the advice of the kind, wise master, they did not heed them, and continued to do as before, so that mowing of the weed as soon as it began to appear became not only a custom but even a sacred tradition, and the meadow grew more and more infested. And the matter went so far that the meadow grew nothing but weeds, and men lamented this and invented all kinds of means to correct the evil; but the only one they did not use was

that which had long ago been prescribed by their kind, wise master.

And now, as time went on, it occurred to one man who saw the wretched condition into which the meadow had fallen, and who found among the master's forgotten prescriptions the rule not to mow the weed, but to pull it up by the root — it occurred to the man, I say, to remind the tenants of the meadow that they were acting foolishly, and that their folly had long ago been pointed out by the kind, wise master.

But what do you think! instead of putting credence in the correctness of this man's recollections, and in case they proved to be reliable ceasing to mow the weed, and in case he were mistaken proving to him the incorrectness of his recollections, or stigmatizing the good, wise master's recommendations as impracticable and not obligatory upon them, the tenants of the meadow did nothing of the sort; but they took exception to this man's recollections and began to abuse him. Some called him a conceited fool who imagined that he was the only one to understand the master's regulations; others called him a malicious false interpreter and slanderer; still others, forgetting that he was not giving them his own opinions, but was only reminding them of the prescriptions of the wise master whom they all revered, called him a dangerous man because he wished to pull up the weed and deprive them of their meadow. "He says we ought not to mow the meadow," said they, purposely suppressing the fact that the man did not say that it was not necessary to destroy the weed, but said that they should pull it up by the roots instead of mowing it, "but if we do not destroy the weed, then it will spread and wholly ruin our meadow. And why was the meadow granted to us if we must train the weed in it?"

And the general impression that this man was either a fool or a false interpreter, or had the purpose of injuring the people, became so deeply grounded that every one cast reproaches and ridicule upon him. And however earnestly he asseverated that he not only did

not desire to spread the weed, but on the contrary considered that the destruction of the weed was one of the chief duties of the agriculturist, just as it was meant by the good, wise master whose words he merely repeated, still they would not listen to him because they had definitely made up their minds that he was either a conceited fool misinterpreting the good, wise master's words, or a villain trying to induce men not to destroy the weeds but to protect and spread them more widely.

The same thing took place in my own case when I pointed out the injunction of the evangelical teaching about the non-resistance of evil by violence. This rule was laid down by Christ and after Him in all times by all His true disciples. But either because they did not notice this rule, or because they did not understand it, or because its fulfilment seemed to them too difficult, as time went the more completely this rule was forgotten, the farther the manner of men's lives departed from this rule; and finally it came to the pass to which it has now come that this rule has already begun to seem to people something new, strange, unheard-of, and even foolish. And I, also, have the same experience as the man had who reminded men of the good, wise master's prescription to refrain from mowing the weed, but to pull it up by the roots.

As the tenants of the meadow purposely shut their eyes to the fact that the counsel was not to give up destroying the weed, but to destroy it by a different method, and said, "We will not listen to this man, he is a fool; he forbids us to mow down the weeds and tells us to pull them up" — so in reply to my reminder that according to Christ's teaching in order to annihilate evil we must not employ violence against it, but must destroy it from the root with love, men said: "We will not listen to him, he is a fool; he advises not to oppose evil to evil so that evil may overwhelm us."

I said that, according to Christ's teaching, evil cannot be eradicated by evil; that all resistance of evil by violence only intensifies the evil, that according to Christ's teaching evil is eradicated by good. *Bless them that*

curse you, pray for them that abuse you, do good to them that hate you, love your enemies, and you will have no enemies! [1]

I said that, according to Christ's teaching, the whole life of man is a battle with evil, a resistance of evil by reason and love, but that out of all the methods of resisting evil Christ excepted only the one unreasonable method of resisting evil with violence, which is equivalent to fighting evil with evil.

And I was misunderstood as saying that Christ taught that we must not resist evil. And all those whose lives were based on violence, and to whom in consequence violence was dear, were glad to take such a misconstruction of my words, and at the same time of Christ's words, and it was avowed that the teaching of non-resistance of evil was incredible, stupid, godless, and dangerous. And men calmly continue under the guise of destroying evil to make it more widely spread.

II

PARABLE THE SECOND

Men were trafficking in flour, butter, milk, and all kinds of food-stuffs. And as each one was desirous of receiving the greatest profit and becoming rich as soon as possible, all these men got more and more into the habit of adulterating their goods with cheap and injurious mixtures: with the flour they mixed bran and lime, they put oleomargarin into their butter, they put water and chalk into their milk. And until these goods reached the consumers all went well: the wholesale traders sold them to the retailers, and the retailers distributed them in small quantities.

There were many stores and shops, and the wares, it seemed, went off very rapidly. And the tradesmen were satisfied. But the city consumers, those that did not raise their own produce and were therefore obliged

[1] "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles."

to buy it, found it very harmful and disagreeable. The flour was bad, the butter and milk were bad, but as there were no other wares except those adulterated to be had in the city markets, the city consumers continued to buy them, and they complained because the food tasted bad and was unwholesome; they blamed themselves, and ascribed it to the wretched way in which the food was prepared. Meantime the tradespeople continued more and more flagrantly to adulterate their food-stuffs with cheap foreign ingredients. Thus passed a sufficiently long time. The city people were all suffering, and no one had the resolution to express his dissatisfaction.

And it happened that a housekeeper who had always given her family food and drink of her own make came to the city. This woman had spent her whole life in the preparation of food, and though she was not a famous cook, still she knew very well how to bake bread and to cook good dinners.

This woman bought various articles in the city and began to bake and cook. Her loaves did not rise, but fell. Her cakes, owing to the oleomargarin butter, seemed tasteless. She set her milk, but there was no cream. The housekeeper instantly came to the conclusion that her purchases were poor. She examined them, and her surmises were confirmed. She found lime in the flour, oleomargarin in the butter, chalk in the milk. Finding that all the materials she had bought were adulterated, the housekeeper went to the bazaars and began in a loud voice to accuse the tradesmen, and to demand that they should either stock their shops with good, nutritious, unadulterated articles, or else cease to trade, and shut up shop.

But the tradesmen paid no attention to the housekeeper, but told her that their goods were first class, that the whole city had been buying of them for so many years, and that they even had medals, and they showed her their medals on their signs. But the housekeeper did not give in.

"I don't need any medals," said she, "but wholesome

food, so that I and my children may not have stomach troubles from it."

"Apparently, my good woman, you have never seen genuine flour and butter," said the tradesmen, showing her the white, pure-looking flour in varnished bins, the wretched imitation of butter lying in neat dishes, and the white fluid in glittering transparent jars.

"Of course I know them," replied the housekeeper, "because all my life long I have had to do with them, and I have cooked with them and have eaten them, I and my children. Your goods are adulterated. Here is the proof of it," said she, displaying the spoilt bread, the oleomargarin in the cakes, and the sediment in the milk. "You ought to throw all this stuff of yours into the river or burn it, and get unadulterated goods instead."

And the woman, standing in front of the shops, kept incessantly crying her one message to the purchasers who came by, and the purchasers began to be troubled.

Then perceiving that this audacious housekeeper was likely to injure their wares, the tradesmen said to the purchasers: —

"Look here, gentlemen, what a lunatic this woman is! She wants people to perish of starvation. She insists on our burning up and destroying all our provisions. What would you have to eat if we should heed her and refuse to sell you our goods? Do not listen to her, she is a coarse countrywoman, and she is no judge of provisions, and it is nothing but envy which makes her attack us. She is poor, and wants every one else to be as poor as she is."

Thus spoke the tradesmen to the gathering throng, purposely blinking the fact that the woman wanted, not that all provisions should be destroyed, but that good ones should be substituted for bad.

And thereupon the throng fell upon the woman and began to beat her. And though she assured them all that she had no wish to destroy the food-stuffs, that, on the contrary, she had all her life been occupied in feeding others and herself, but that she only wanted that those men that took upon themselves the feeding of the

people should not poison them with deleterious adulterations pretending to be edible. Though she pleaded her cause eloquently, they refused to hear her because their minds were made up that she wanted to deprive people of the food which they needed.

The same thing has happened to me in regard to the art and science of our day.

All my life long I have been fed on this food, and to the best of my ability I have attempted to feed others on it. And as this for me is a food and not an object of traffic or luxury, I know beyond a question when food is food and when it is only a counterfeit. And now when I made trial of the food which in our time began to be offered for sale in the intellectual bazaar under the guise of art and science, and attempted to feed those dear to me with it, I discovered that a large part of this food was not genuine. And when I declared that the art and the science on sale in the intellectual bazaar are *margarined* or at least contain great mixtures of what is foreign to true art and true science, and that I know this because the produce I have bought in the intellectual bazaar has been proved to be, not merely disadvantageous to me and those near and dear to me, but positively deleterious, then I was hooted at and abused, and it was insinuated that I did this because I was untrained and could not properly treat of such lofty objects.

When I began to show that the dealers themselves in these intellectual wares were all the time charging one another of cheating, when I called to mind that in all times under the name of art and science much that was bad and harmful was offered to men, and that consequently in our time also the same danger was threatening, that this was no joke, that the poison for the soul was many times more dangerous than a poison for the body, and that therefore these spiritual products ought to be examined with the greatest attention when they are offered to us in the form of food, and everything counterfeit and deleterious ought to be rejected, — when I began to say this, no one, no one, not a single man in

a single article or book made reply to these arguments, but from all the shops there was a chorus of cries against me as against the woman: "He is a fool! He wants to destroy art and science which we live by! Beware of him and do not heed him! Hear us, hear us! We have the very latest foreign wares!"

III

PARABLE THE THIRD

TRAVELERS were making a journey. And they happened to lose their way, so that they found themselves proceeding, not on a smooth road, but across a bog, among clumps of bushes, briers, and fallen trees, which blocked their progress, and even to move grew more and more difficult.

Then the travelers divided into two parties; one decided not to stop, but to keep going in the direction that they had been going, assuring themselves and the others that they had not wandered from the right road, and were sure to reach their journey's end.

The other party decided that, as the direction in which they were now going was evidently not the right one — otherwise they would long ago have reached the journey's end — it was necessary to find the road, and in order to find it, it was requisite that without delay they should move as rapidly as possible in all directions. All the travelers were divided between these two opinions: some decided to keep going straight ahead, the others decided to make trials in all directions; but there was one man who, without sharing either opinion, declared that before continuing in the direction in which they had been going, or beginning to move rapidly in all directions, hoping that by this means they might find the right way, it was necessary first of all to pause and deliberate on their situation, and then after due deliberation to decide on one thing or the other.

But the travelers were so excited by the disturbance,

were so alarmed at their situation, they were so desirous of flattering themselves with the hope that they had not lost their way, but had only temporarily wandered from the road, and would soon find it again, and, above all, they had such a desire to forget their terror by moving about, that this opinion was met with universal indignation, with reproaches, and with the ridicule of those of both parties.

"It is the advice of weakness, cowardice, sloth," they said.

"It is a fine way to reach the end of our journey, sitting down and not moving from the place!" cried others.

"For this are we men, and for this is strength given us, to struggle and labor, conquering obstacles, and not pusillanimously giving in to them," exclaimed still others.

And in spite of what was said by the man that differed from the rest, "how if we proceeded in a wrong direction without changing it, we should never attain our goal, but go farther from it, and how we should never attain it either if we kept flying from one direction to another, and how the only means of attaining our goal was by taking observation from the sun or the stars and thus finding what direction we must take to reach it, and having chosen it to stick to it — and how to do this it was necessary first of all to halt, and to halt not for the purpose of stopping, but to find the right way and then unfalteringly to go in it, and how for either case it was necessary to stop and consider" — in spite of all this argument, they refused to heed him.

And the first division of the travelers went off in the direction in which they had been going, and the second division kept changing their course; but neither division succeeded in attaining their journey's end, but up to the present time, moreover, they have not yet escaped from the bushes and the briers, but are still lost.

Exactly the same thing happened to me when I attempted to express my doubts as to whether the road which we have taken through the dark forest of the labor question and through the all-swallowing bog of the end-

less armament of the nations is exactly the right route by which we ought to go, that it is very possible that we have lost our way, and that, therefore, it might be well for us for a time to stop moving in that direction which is evidently wrong, and first of all to consider, by means of the universal and eternal laws of truth revealed to us, what the direction is by which we intend to go.

No one replied to this, not a person said, "We are not mistaken in our direction and we are not gone astray; we are sure of this for this reason and for that."

Not a person said, "Possibly we are mistaken, but we have an infallible means of correcting our error without ceasing to move."

No one said either the one thing or the other. But all were indignant, took offense, and hastened to quench my solitary voice with a simultaneous outburst.

"We are so indolent and backward! And this is the advice of indolence, sluggishness, inefficiency!"

Some even went so far as to add: —

"It 's all nonsense! Don't listen to him. Follow us."

And they shouted like those that reckon that salvation is to be found in unchangedly traveling a once selected road, whatever it may have been; like those also that expect to find salvation in flying about in all directions.

"Why wait? Why consider? Push forward! Everything will come out of itself!"

Men have lost their way and are suffering in consequence. It would seem that the first main application of energy which should be put forth ought to be directed, not to the confirmation of the movement that has seduced us into the false position where we are, but to the cessation of it. It would seem clear that as soon as we stopped we might, in a measure, comprehend our situation, and discover the direction in which we ought to go in order to attain true happiness, not for one man, not for one class of men, but that general good of humanity toward which all men are striving and every human heart by itself. But how is it? Men invent everything possible, but do not hit upon the one thing

that might prove their salvation, or if it did not do that, might at least ameliorate their condition; I mean, that they should pause for a moment and not go on increasing their misfortunes by their fallacious activity. Men are conscious of the wretchedness of their condition, and are doing all they can to avoid it, but the one thing that would assuredly ameliorate it they are unwilling to do, and the advice given them to do it, more than anything else, rouses their indignation.

If there were any possibility of doubting the fact that we have gone astray, then this treatment of the advice to "think it over" proves more distinctly than anything else how hopelessly astray we have gone and how great is our despair.

1895.

A TERRIBLE QUESTION[1]

IS there in Russia sufficient grain to feed the people until the new crop is gathered?

Some say there is, others say there is not; but no one knows this absolutely. But this must be known, and known definitely now before the beginning of the winter — just as it is necessary for men who are going off on a long voyage to know whether the ship has a sufficient supply of fresh water and food or not.

It is terrible to think what would happen to the officers and passengers of the ship when in the middle of the ocean it should transpire that all the provisions had gone. It is still more terrible to think what will happen to us if we believe in those that assure us that we have grain enough for all the starving, and it should prove before spring that they were mistaken in their assurances.

It is terrible to think of the consequence of such a blunder. Why, the consequence of this blunder would be something awful: the death of millions by starvation, and, worst of all misfortunes, the exasperation and anger of men. It is good merely by cannon-shots to warn the inhabitants of Petersburg that the water is rising, because that is all that can be done. No one knows, no one can know, how high the water will rise; whether it will stand where it stood the year before, or reach its limit of four and twenty years ago, or rise still higher.

The famine of this year, moreover, is a misfortune incomparably greater than the misfortune of the flood,

[1] The "terrible question" was decided propitiously, so that in Russia there was an abundance of grain. — PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

incomparably more universal, it threatens all Russia; it is misfortune the degree of which may and should, not only be foreseen, but may and should be foreseen and prevented.

"Ah! that will do! For Russia there will be sufficient, and more than sufficient, of every kind of grain for all," is said and written by certain people, and others who like freedom from bother are inclined to believe this. But it is impossible to believe what is said at haphazard, or by conjecture, regarding an object of such awful importance.

If it is said that in regard to the doubtful solidity of a bath in which people go once a week on a Saturday, the beams still stand, and there is no need of replacing them, one may believe them and risk leaving the bath without repairs; but if it concerns the dubious ceiling of a theater in which thousands are sitting every evening, the unanimous decision will be, that though the probabilities are it will not fall this evening, still one cannot feel confidence and be at ease. The threatened danger is too great.

Now the danger threatening Russia is that the grain necessary for the sustenance of the people is not to be had at any price, and this danger is so awful that the imagination refuses to depict what would happen if this was so; and therefore to content ourselves with the unsupported assurances of those that declare that in Russia we have enough grain, not only would not follow, but would be senseless and criminal.

But does such a danger exist? Is there any likelihood that there will not be enough bread?

The following observations may serve as an answer to this question:—

In the first place, it is a fact that a whole third of Russia is attacked by famine, and that third is the very one which has always supported a large part of the other two-thirds. Kaluga, Tver, Moscow, all the "black earth" and northern governments, even the "black earth" districts of these governments, where there was no failure in the crops, have never lived on

their own products, but have always bought it of those that now must live on foreign grain.

Therefore, if it is reckoned, let us suppose, that each person must have ten puds — well, let us say there are only twenty millions — though they are reckoned as high as forty millions — of inhabitants in these famine-stricken districts, then two hundred million puds of grain will be needed, and this is far from representing the whole amount of grain necessary for the sustenance of all Russia. To this figure must be added all that is needed besides for those that have subsisted in former years on the grain of the famine-stricken localities, and this very probably will constitute as much again.

The failure of the harvest in the most fertile places accomplishes something like what happens when you shorten the arm of a lever: you not only diminish the power of the shorter end, but you increase as many times the power of the larger end. A third of Russia is attacked by famine, the most fertile part, which has fed the other two-thirds, and therefore it is very probable that there will not be enough grain for all. This is one consideration.

The second consideration is that the countries bordering on Russia will suffer in the same way from failure of harvest, and that therefore a great amount of grain has been exported, and now in the form of wheat continues to be exported abroad.

The third consideration is that in absolute contrariety to what happened during the famine year, 1840, this year there is, and can be, no stores of grain.

In Russia something has happened like what happened according to the Bible tale in Egypt; only with this difference, that in Russia there was no Joseph to foretell, and there have been no provident and orderly men like Joseph; but there have been mills, railways, banks, and both the authorities and private persons have suffered from great lack of money. In all the years preceding, more than seven, there has been much grain, prices have been low; but the lack of money has grown and grown as it regularly increased amongst us, and the

conveniences of trade, mills, railways, and buying agents encouraged to trade, and brought it about that wheat was wholly sold by autumn.

If during the last years, when wheat had reached an especially low price, certain venders began to lay in a store of grain, waiting for a price, then this storage was so difficult that, as soon as the prices advanced at the beginning of the spring of this year, and reached fifty and sixty kopeks a pud, then all the grain was sold and cleaned out, and nothing remained of the provisions of previous years. In 1840 not only had the proprietors and tradesmen plenty of provisions, but everywhere among the muzhiks were from three to five years' stores of old grain. Now this custom has gone by, and there is nothing like it anywhere. In this consists the third consideration: that grain this year will not be sufficient.

But not only is there a probability of this, but there are also symptoms, and sufficiently definite symptoms, that this lack exists.

One of these symptoms is the every day more and more frequently repeated phenomenon that there is no bread on sale in the depths of the famine-stricken localities, as in that in which I am now — in the Dankovsky District, there is no *rye on sale. The muzhiks cannot get flour.*

Yesterday I saw two muzhiks of the Dankovsky District, who had been driving around a radius well known to them, of twenty versts, to all the mills and shops, to buy for money two puds of flour, and they could not find it. One begged for some at the *dépôt* of another district; the other obtained some.

And this phenomenon is not exceptional; it is constantly repeated, and everywhere. Millers come to ask for Christ's sake — *Khrista radi* — to let them have flour at the zemstvo *dépôts*, because they have no flour, and cannot get any. Of tradesmen in the cities, of the railway, it may be bought in bulk, at least a half a carload or a carload; but at retail there is none to be had. The great merchants who have a supply will not sell at all, they are waiting; the small tradesmen, storekeepers,

buy up all they can, and sell it again at a profit to the wholesale merchants. Retail trade is only in bazaars, on market days, and then, if the purchaser comes too late, there is none to be had.

This symptom, it seems to me, shows with sufficient plainness that there is not as much grain as is needed. The same thing is proved partly, also, by the prices, although this year, hitherto, there are reasons which do not permit prices to be a legitimate proof of the conformity of demand with supply. The prices are lower than they ought to be, and are maintained on this lower level artificially: in the first place by the interdiction of exporting grain abroad; in the second place by the action of the zemstvos, which sell rye and meal at reduced prices. I am speaking of the price of rye, supposing that the prices of other food products — beets, potatoes, millet, oats — more or less correspond to the price of rye.

The prohibition of foreign exportations reduced prices, in other words, caused prices to be an unreliable indication of the amount of any given commodity. Just exactly as the height of the level of the water in a dammed river cannot be an indication of its actual level, so the present price of rye cannot accurately mark the relation of the demand to its supply. The prohibition of the export of other breadstuffs has the same effect. The prices now existing are prices not self-sustaining, and are in any case reduced temporarily, in consequence of the prohibition of export. This is one cause of the fact that prices are lower than they ought to be.

Another cause is the action of the zemstvos.

The zemstvos everywhere buy only in small quantities, rarely one-fourth part of the grain needed for nourishment according to their lists, and they sell the grain at a reduced price. This action of the zemstvos also reduces the price, since if there were no sale from the *dépôts* of the zemstvos, this sale would come from the large dealers who, according as the demand increased, would raise the prices. And therefore I think the price now maintained is not the actual price.

The price at the present time I think is far lower than what it would be if it were not for the action of the zemstvos. And this price would immediately rise with extraordinary rapidity if only it should occur to the zemstvos to buy the remaining three-fourths of the grain they need.

We might say that the price will not rise if the zemstvos had bought now the whole quantity needed, and rye were on sale at that price. But according to the present state of things there is no likelihood that this was so. According to the present state of circumstances, that is to say, at the price of one ruble seventy kopeks, when the zemstvos did not buy even one-fourth of the necessary grain, and when there was no rye offered for sale anywhere, even in small quantities, there is, on the contrary, a probability that by reason of the zemstvos buying the whole quantity they needed the price would suddenly rise to a price which would show that there was none of the grain in Russia. The price even now in our localities has risen to the highest notch to which it has ever attained, to one ruble seventy kopeks, and still continues to rise regularly.

All these symptoms show that there is a great probability that Russia has not the grain she needs.

But besides these symptoms there is still another phenomenon which ought to compel us to take all possible measures to avert the misfortune that threatens us. This phenomenon is the panic which has seized society, that is to say, the undefined obscure terror of some expected misfortune — the terror which people communicate to one another, the terror which deprives people of the capability of working to any purpose. This panic is expressed even in the prohibition of exporting first rye, then of the other breadstuffs, except for some reason of millet, and in such measures, on the one hand, as assigning great sums for the starving, and on the other hand, the collecting by the local authorities of assessments from those who can pay, as if the extraction of money from the country were not a direct enhancement of the poverty of the country.

A rich muzhik holds a mortgage on a poor one's ungathered crops. He would not push him, but the taxes are demanded from him, so he has to demand payment from the poor man, and ruins him.

This panic is particularly noticeable in the controversies between the various local departments. There is a repetition of what always takes place in a panic terror; some pull in one direction, some in another.

This panic is also noticeable in the amusements and activities of the people. I will adduce one example, the movement of the people toward wage-earning.

The people toward the end of October of this year go to seek occupation in Moscow and Petersburg, at the time when all the labors for the winter have ceased, when provisions are three times more expensive than usual, and every householder has got rid of all the superfluous persons he can, at a time when everywhere there is a multitude of laboring men thrown out of work — then people, who never had any position in the cities, go and seek those situations.

Is it not evident to every one that in such conditions there is more likelihood of every proprietor of a lottery ticket drawing two hundred thousand rubles than of a muzhik who comes to Moscow from the country finding a place, and that every journey, even though very inexpensive, with the expenses incidental to travel, where there is some drinking, is only a supernumerary difficulty rushing on the poor?

It would seem as if it ought to be evident, but all come — come back and come again. Is not this a symptom of the absolute senselessness which seizes the throng at every panic?

All these symptoms, and chiefly the phenomenon of the panic, are very significant, and therefore one cannot help fearing. It is impossible to say, as is generally said about the enemy before our forces are compared with his, we can catch him with our hats. The enemy, the terrible enemy, stands here before us, and we cannot say we do not fear him, because we know what he is, and more than all, we know that we fear him.

But if we fear him, then it is necessary for us before all to know his strength. It is impossible for us to remain in this ignorance in which we find ourselves.

Let us admit that Russian society, the people that live outside the famine-stricken localities, find their solidarity both spiritual and material with the unfortunate people, and undergo actual serious sacrifices for the help of the starving. Let us admit that the activity of these people, who live now amid the starving, laboring for them, according to the measure of their ability, will continue till the end, and that the numbers of these people will increase; let us admit that the people themselves are not down-hearted, and will fight with poverty, as they are now fighting with it, by all negative and positive means — in other words restraining themselves and increasing their energy and inventiveness for the attainment of the means of life; let us admit that all this has been done and will be done for a month, two, three, six months — then suddenly the price goes up, goes up, just as it has been going up, from forty-five kopeks to one ruble seventy kopeks, regularly from bazaar to bazaar, and in a few weeks reaches two or three rubles a pud, and it transpires that there is no grain, and that all the sacrifices endured, both by those that gave money and by those that have been living and laboring amid the sufferers, were wasted expenditures of means and forces, and chiefly that all the energy of the people was expended in vain, and in spite of all their efforts they, that is a part of them, would nevertheless have to die of starvation, then how could we know and prevent it?

It is impossible, impossible, and again impossible to remain in this uncertainty, impossible for us, wise, learned people to remain so. The muzhik whom I saw yesterday was doing about all that he could. He had procured money, and had gone to seek for grain. He had been to Mikharl Vasilyef's, he had been to the mill, he had been to Chernavo — nowhere could he obtain meal. After he had gone to all the places where meal might possibly be, he knew that he had done his best; and if

after this he could not get meal anywhere and he and his family should be attacked by famine, he would know that he had done to the best of his ability, and his conscience would be at rest.

But for us, if it is shown that there is no grain to be had, and our labors are brought to naught, and we and the people maybe are perishing together, our consciences will not be at rest. We might have known how much grain would be needed by us, and might have got it. If our learning and our science are of any use to us, then for what more important purpose than to enable us to help in such a universal tribulation as ours to-day? Let us decide how much grain is necessary for the nourishment of those that have none this year and how much there is in Russia, and if there is not as much as is necessary, then let us order from foreign lands as much grain as is needed; this is our direct business, and just as natural as what the muzhik did yesterday when he made a circuit of twenty versts. And our consciences will be at rest only when we make our circuit and do in it all that we can. For him the circuit is Dankof, Klekotki; for us the circuit is India, America, Australia. We not only know that these countries exist, we are already in friendly intercourse with their inhabitants.

But how can we estimate what we need and the grain which we have? Can this be so difficult? We who can count how many kinds of beetles there are in the world, how many microbes there are in such and such a space, how many millions of versts it is to the stars, and how many puds of iron and hydrogen there are in each one — we, forsooth, are not able to reckon up how much people need to eat so as not to perish of starvation, and how much grain has been garnered by the people from the fields whereby we have been, and still are, nourished. We who with such wealth of detail have collected such a mass of statistical materials — so far as I know up to the present time of no use to any living person — details as to the percentage of births as compared to marriages and deaths and the like — we suddenly find ourselves

not in a condition to collect the only information which in the course of a century is helpful, is really useful. This cannot be. To collect these details — accurate ones and not conjectural, and not approximate — details like those furnished in regard to the number of the population in a one day's census, is possible.

Information is needed as to how much more than the ordinary amount of grain bought for the support of the Russian people must be furnished this year for the inhabitants of the famine-stricken localities, and how much grain there is in Russia.

Whether the answers to these questions are easy or difficult, they are indispensable for the prevention, not only of the panic, — that is, of that confusedly contagious terror of approaching misfortune in which men are now living, — but principally for the averting of the misfortune itself.

And not approximate, not haphazard, answers are required, but systematic ones; the matter is too serious for us to be able to do it merely sketching the head, in other words, to build this vault which we do, not knowing whether the stone will suffice to complete it.

These details the government may receive; the zemstvo may receive them on the spot, and more trustworthy than all, a private society constituted for this purpose may receive them. There is not a district where there would not be found, not merely one, but many men, who would be able and would willingly serve in this business.

It seems to me not excessively difficult. In a week's time, without much trouble, an active man can traverse a quarter or a fifth of a district, especially if he lives in it; and with a possibility of error of from ten to fifteen per cent can determine the amount of grain requisite for subsistence, and the amount on hand above and beyond that required by each person. I, at least, will undertake personally to furnish such information within a week's time regarding a quarter of the district in which I live. The same is said and can be done by the majority of the country people with whom I have talked in regard to this. To organize a central bureau in which

could be collected and grouped all the separate items, and which might send its members with this object in view into places where volunteers were not forthcoming, I imagine would be feasible and not difficult. There might be mistakes, there might be concealments — concealments on the part of those having grain — there might be transfers of grain from one place to another, causing errors; but the errors of reckoning I imagine would not be great, and the information received in this way would be sufficiently precise to answer the chief question, painful as it is, even if not expressed but felt by all: Is there, or is there not, enough grain in Russia?

If, let us suppose, it is shown that this year, according to the reckoning of the grain employed generally for the army and for liquor-distilling, the abundance against that which is necessary for the sustenance of the people constitutes one hundred or fifty million puds, supposing that a part of these one hundred million might be kept by dealers, a part spoilt, a part burned, a part might constitute a mistake in reckoning, we might calmly and resolutely go on living. If there was no superfluity at all, and it was shown that in Russia there was not as much grain as was necessary, the state of things would be dubious and dangerous; but, nevertheless, it might be that, by not ordering grain from abroad, only by modifying the amount of grain used, for example, on liquor-distilling, giving out some of the grain gratuitously, it might be possible to go on living and working.

But if it were proved that we are one hundred or fifty million puds of grain short, the situation would be dangerous. It would be analogous to what takes place when a fire flashes out and catches a building. But if we know this now it would be as if when the fire first burst out, it was still possible to extinguish it.

If we should find this out only when the last ten thousand puds were going, then it would be like the fire which should have already caught the building and there was now little hope of escaping from it.

If we now knew that we had an insufficiency of grain,

let it be fifty or one hundred or even two hundred million puds, all this would not be so terrible. We could now buy that amount of grain in America and it could always be paid for by governmental, social, or popular funds.

The people who are working ought to know that their work has a meaning and is not wasted.

Without this consciousness hands fall idle. But in order to know this for that work in which now are employed an enormous number of Russian people, it is necessary to know now, instantly, within two or three weeks, whether we have enough grain for this year, and if not, then where we can get enough to remedy the deficit.

Byegichevko, November 13, 1891.

MEANS OF HELPING THE POPULATION SUFFERING FROM BAD HARVESTS

HELP for the population suffering from bad harvests may have two objects: support of the peasant proprietors and prevention of people running the risk of illness, and even death, from want and from the bad quality of food.

Are these objects attained by the aid now extended in the form of twenty or thirty pounds of flour a month to each consumer, reckoning or not reckoning laborers? I think not. And I think not from the following considerations:—

All the peasant families of all agricultural Russia may be distributed under three types. First, the wealthy farm with eight or ten souls, on the average twelve souls to a family, with from three to five hired men, on the average four, from three to five horses, on the average four, and from three to nine desyatins of land, on the average six. That is a rich farmer. Such a muzhik not only feeds his family with his grain, but frequently hires one or two laborers, buys up land of those worse off than himself, and sells them grain and seed. All this, maybe, is done on conditions not favorable for the poor, but the result is that in the country, where there are ten per cent of these rich men, the land is not idle, and in case of necessity the poor man may have the means of obtaining grain, seed, even money.

The second type is that of the average muzhik, with great difficulty making the ends of the year meet by means of his two parcels of land, and one or two

"hands," and one or two horses. This dvor is almost wholly supported by its own grain. What it lacks is obtained by a member of the family living out.

And the third type is the poor fellow with a family of from three to five "souls," with one laboring man, and frequently with no horse. This kind never has grain enough; every year he is obliged to invent some means of getting himself out of his tight place, and he is always within a hair's breadth of being a pauper, and at the slightest misfortune he will beg.

The aid given in the form of flour to the inhabitants of the famine-stricken places is distributed by means of lists of peasant families according to their means. By means of these lists calculations are made as to how much help is to be afforded to any particular family. And this help is given only to the very poorest, — that is to say, to the families of the third type.

A "dvor" of the first type, — belonging to the rich or well-to-do peasant who still has several chetverts[1] of oats, who has two horses, a cow, sheep, receives no help. But investigation into the condition, not only of the average, but of the rich muzhik, makes one see that if the peasant agricultural class is to be sustained, these are the very farmers that need help most.

Let us suppose that a rich peasant has still a little rye left, he has twenty or more chetverts of oats, he has five horses and two cows and eighteen sheep, and because he has all this he receives no help. But reckon up his income and his expenses, and you will see that he is in just as much need as the poor man. In order to support the rotation which he has undertaken with his hired land, he must sow about ten chetverts. What grain remains, at forty, fifty, even sixty rubles, is nothing in comparison with what he needs for his family of twelve souls. For twelve souls he needs fifteen puds at one ruble fifty kopeks — twenty-two rubles fifty kopeks a month — two hundred and twenty-five rubles for ten months. Moreover, he needs forty, fifty, or seventy

[1] A *chetvert* is 5.77 bushels; a *pud* is 40 Russian, or 36.11 avoirdupois pounds; a *desyatin* of land is 2.7 acres. — Ed.

rubles to satisfy the rent on his hired land; he has to pay his taxes. The members of his family living out this year either receive less than before, by grain being high, or are entirely paid off. He needs three hundred and fifty rubles, but he receives even less than two hundred, and therefore one thing is left for him to do, — to give up his hired land, to sell his seed oats, to sell a part of his horses, for which there is no price, — in other words, to descend to the level of the average muzhik, and even lower, because the average muzhik has a smaller family.

But no help, or very little, is given to the average muzhik if he has any oats left or a horse or two. So that he is obliged to sell his land to the exceptionally rich, to eat his seed oats, and then also his horse. So that by the distribution of help as it obtains now, the rich must infallibly descend to the level of the average and the average to the level of the poor. And by the conditions obtaining this year, almost all, except the unusually rich, are obliged to descend in this way. The distribution of flour, not attaining its object of supporting the peasant husbandry, does not attain its second object either — that of safeguarding the people from famine diseases. The distribution of flour by "souls" does not secure this for the following reasons: —

In the first place, because in such a distribution of flour there is always a possibility that the person receiving it will yield to the temptation of squandering what he has received, and selling it for drink, and this has happened, though not in many instances.

In the second place, because this help, falling into the hands of the poor, saves them from starvation only in case the family has some means of its own. The largest apportionment amounts to thirty pounds to each man. And if thirty pounds of flour, together with potatoes and some admixture with the flour for baking bread, may support a man for the period of a month, then in complete poverty, when they have not the wherewithal to buy even lebeda-weed to mix with their bread, thirty pounds of flour is used up in the form of unmodi-

fied bread in the course of fifteen or twenty days, and the people, left in an absolutely starving condition for ten days, are likely to become sick and even to die from lack of food.

In the third place, the distribution of flour among poor families, even among those that still have means of their own, does not attain the purpose of forefending men from famine diseases, because in a family where strong men easily get along with poor food, the weak, the young, and the old contract disease from want and the poor quality of food.

In all famine-stricken places all families, both rich and poor, eat miserable bread made with lebeda-weed.

Strange to say now in a large number of cases the very poor, on receiving grain from the zemstvo, eat unmodified bread, while almost all the rich families eat it with orach, with this year's disgusting unripe lebeda-weed.[1]

And it all the time happens that while the stronger members of a rich family thrive on the lebeda-weed bread, the weaker, older members pine away and die of it.

Thus a sick woman comes from a rich farm, carrying in her hand a piece of black lebeda-weed bread constituting her principal article of food, and asking admission in the eating-room simply because she is sick, and then only while she is sick.

Another example: I come to a muzhik who is not receiving assistance and considers himself rich. He lives alone with his wife; they have no children. I find them at dinner. Potato soup and bread with the lebeda-weed. In the trough is new bread, likewise adulterated with a large proportion of the lebeda. The husband and wife are healthy and happy, but on the stove is

[1] The fact that this year *lebeda*, orach, or pig-weed is universally employed in food may be explained by the tradition that they have eaten this weed before, — and there is a proverb to the effect that "it is no misfortune to have lebeda in the rye," — and the fact that it grows in the rye-field and is ground up with the rye. It seems to me that if it were not for this tradition and if it were not found in the rye-fields they would sooner adulterate their bread with oats, straw, or sawdust than with this deleterious weed. But they mix it in everywhere. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

an old woman who is ill from the effects of the lebeda-weed bread, and declares that it is better to eat once a day only to have good bread to eat, but that this does not keep up one's strength.

Or a third case: a peasant woman comes from a rich farm to ask for her thirteen-year-old daughter admission to the eating-room because they cannot feed her at home. This daughter is of illegitimate birth, and therefore she is not liked and is not willingly fed. There are many similar cases, and therefore the distribution of help in flour from hand to hand does not keep the old, the feeble, and the unpopular members of the family from sickness and death, in consequence of the unsuitability or lack of food.

Painful as it is to say this, notwithstanding the remarkable energy and even self-control of the majority of provincial workers, their activity, consisting in the distribution of help in corn, does not fulfil its purpose of supporting the agricultural peasantry or of preventing the possibility of diseases from famine.

But if what is done now is not good, what is good? What should be done?

Two things in my opinion are necessary, not for the support merely of the agricultural peasantry, but to prevent them from ultimate ruin: the organization of work for every community able to work; and the establishment of free refectories for the young, the old, the feeble, and the sick in all country places suffering from the famine.

The organization of labor ought to be such that it should be accessible, well-known, and familiar to the population, and not such as the people have never occupied themselves with or even seen, or else such as they are often unable to perform; as, for instance, by compelling the members of the families who have never gone away to leave home, or undergo other adverse conditions, such as lack of clothing.

Work ought to be such that, besides their work out of doors, to which all the capable and able-bodied muzhiks can resort for wages, there should be domestic work

suitable for the whole population of the famine-stricken places — men, women, hale old men, and half-grown children.

This year's distress is due not only to lack of grain, but also to the no less absolute lack of both money and chances of earning money — there is no work, and several millions of the population are condemned to enforced idleness.

If the grain necessary for the support of the population is at hand, in other words can be placed where it is needed, at a price within their reach, then the starving people might earn this grain for themselves, provided only there was an opportunity of work, and materials for work and sale.

But if they do not have this opportunity, hundreds of millions will be irrevocably wasted in the distribution of gratuitous aid, but the misery will not be relieved. The matter is not wholly in the material loss; the idleness of a whole population receiving gratuitous food has a terribly demoralizing tendency.

Outside industries may be organized in the most varied ways, both for winter and still more for summer-time, and God grant that these industries may be organized as speedily as possible and on the largest possible scale. But besides these great private industries, it is a matter of immediate necessity and enormous importance that the population be furnished with the opportunity of doing their own familiar work, without leaving their homes and their accustomed surroundings, and of getting pay for it, even though it be at a very cheap rate.

In the famine-stricken country districts neither hemp nor flax grew, oats almost wholly failed, and the women have no yarn and nothing to weave. The wives, the girls, and the old women, ordinarily occupied, sit idle. Moreover, the muzhiks, who stay at home and have no money to buy linden bark, also sit without their usual winter avocations — the weaving of *lapti*, or bark shoes. The children, as well, waste their time idly, for the schools are for the most part closed. The population,

having to face only the trying scenes of a more exaggerated need, deprived of their ordinary and more than ever indispensable means of recreation and forgetfulness, — of work, — sit for whole days at a time with folded hands, discussing various rumors and propositions about help given and to be given, but especially about their poverty; "they grow gloomy and lose their spirits, and that is the reason more than anything else that they get sick," said a sensible old man to me.

Not to mention the economical significance of work for this year, its moral significance is enormous. Work, any kind of work which should employ the idle people this year, is a most pressing necessity.

Until we shall see organized the great industries for which there were various very sensible plans, now, it is rumored, being established, and destined to confer inestimable blessings, if only in the establishment of them the habits and convenience of the population are taken into consideration, — if only in all the famine-stricken districts the opportunity is given for all the remaining people to work at the work they are accustomed to, the men to pleat lapti and the women to spin and weave, and the opportunity is given to sell what they make by this labor, — then this would be, at least, a great help against the decline of the Russian husbandry, even if it did not entirely stop it.

If it be granted that a place can be obtained for cloth at eight kopeks the arshin — and this is possible when it is produced in large quantities — and that lapti which will last for years will be bought at ten kopeks a pair, then each man's earnings will be at the very least five kopeks, that is to say one ruble fifty kopeks a month. If in addition to this it is admitted that in every family on the average not more than one-fourth of the members are unable to work, then it seems that for every person in a family there will be earned one-fourth of 4.50 kopeks, in other words 1.12 kopek; that is to say, considerably more than what now comes from the zemstvo with such strain, bickerings, and quarrels, and producing such general discontent.

Such would be the calculation, if work familiar to all the country population, unquestionably accessible, and the very cheapest, were performed.

Means would be received exceeding that which is now received from a gratuitous or loan distribution, to say nothing of the insoluble difficulty of giving it out, and especially the discontent which is produced by individual distribution. For the attainment of this it would be necessary to spend comparatively small sums for the purchase of materials for labor — flax and linden bark, and secure a place for these productions.

In the organization of these industries, and the furnishing the women with materials for spinning and the sale of the fabric spun by them, many people are already interested, but as yet only on a very small scale. We have also begun this work, but up to the present time have not yet the flax, wool, and bast ordered. Our proposition to the peasants to occupy themselves with work for the sale of lapti and cloth was everywhere received with enthusiasm. They would say to us: —

"If we earn only three kopeks a day it is far better than to sit idle."

Of course this refers only to the five winter months; during the four summer months, till the first fruits, their industries might be vastly more productive.

For the attainment of our purpose, not, perhaps, the support of peasant husbandry, but at least the stoppage of its decay, there is in my opinion only this means — the organization of industries.

For the attainment of our second purpose, the salvation of the people from disease consequent on bad and insufficient food, in my opinion, the only infallible means is the organization in every village of a free table at which every man may have enough to eat if he is hungry.

The organization of free tables, begun by us more than a month ago, is now carried on with a success exceeding our expectations. These eating-rooms are arranged in the following way: —

On my arrival at Yepifansky District, toward the end

of September, I met my old friend, I. I. Rayevsky, to whom I communicated my intention of establishing free tables in the famine-stricken districts. He invited me to take up my quarters at his house, and while not desisting from all other forms of help, not only approved my plan of establishing free tables, but undertook to assist me in this work; and with that love for the people, resolution, and simplicity characteristic of him, immediately, even before our arrival at his house, began this business, opening six such eating-rooms in his own vicinity.

The method employed by him consisted in his proposing to widows or the poorest inhabitants of the poorest villages to feed those that should come to them, and in furnishing the necessary provisions for this purpose.

The starosta and his assistants made out a list of the children and old people deserving of maintenance at the free table, and these eating-rooms were opened in six villages. These eating-rooms, in spite of the fact that they were opened by the starostas and Rayevsky's steward, without his personal superintendence, went very well and were maintained about a month.

Toward the time of our arrival, which coincided with the first distribution of help from the government, five of the free eating-rooms were closed, because the persons frequenting them began to receive a monthly allowance, and consequently did not need double help.

Very soon, however, in spite of the distribution of aid, the need had so increased that it was felt to be necessary to reopen the closed eating-rooms and establish new ones. In the course of the four weeks spent by us here we opened thirty.

At first we opened them in accordance with information received concerning the most poverty-stricken villages, but now for more than a week, from various directions, petitions have come to us in regard to opening new eating-rooms, but we have not yet had time to grant them.

The act of opening eating-rooms is as follows — we at least have proceeded in this way: Having learned

of a particularly needy village, we drive to it, go to the starosta, and having explained our purpose, we call in some of the old men and question them about the actual condition of the farms from one end of the village to the other. The starosta, his wife, the old men, and perhaps one or two more who have come out of curiosity to the izba, describe to us the state of affairs in the village.

"Well, on the left hand side: Maksim Aptokhin. How is he?"

"His is a hard case. He has children, seven of them. And no bread this long time. We must relieve him of his old woman and one child."

We write down, "From Maksim Aptokhin — two." Then comes Feodor Abramof.

"They are in a bad case too. Still, they can get along." But here the starosta's wife puts in a word, and says that he is in a bad state and we must relieve him of one child. Then comes an old man, a soldier of Nicholas's time.

"He is almost dead of starvation."

Demyon Sapronof — "they are subsisting."

And thus the whole village is scanned.

A proof of the justice and lack of caste feeling shown by the peasants in appraising the needs of the villagers may be seen in this: that notwithstanding the fact that many peasants were not admitted in the first village, in the village of Tatishchevo in Ruikhotskaya Volost', where we opened an eating-room, in the number of the unquestionably poor whom we had to admit to the free table, the peasants nominated, without the slightest hesitation, the widow of a pope and her children and the wife of a *diachok* or sexton.

Thus all the enumerated forms were generally divided according to the report of the starosta and the neighbors into three classes: those unquestionably hard up, some of whom ought to be admitted to the free table; those that were unquestionably well off, such as could support themselves; and thirdly, those concerning whom there was some question. This doubt was generally set-

tled by the number of people coming to the eating-room. To feed more than forty persons is no easy matter for the hosts. And therefore, if the number of those applying is less than forty, the doubtful ones are admitted; but if more, then some have to be turned away. Generally some persons unquestionably deserving of sustenance at the public tables seem left out, and according to the force of testimony changes and additions are made. If it is learned that in a village there are very many unquestionably needy persons, then a second and sometimes even a third eating-room is opened.

On the average, both at our establishments as well as at those of our neighbor, N. F., who is acting independently of us, the number of persons getting their meals at the public table always constitutes about one-third of all the effective population.

There are many — almost every householder — willing to keep the eating-room, that is, to bake bread, to cook, to boil, to serve the pensioners, in exchange for the right of having free food and fuel. To such a degree are they desirous of keeping the eating-rooms, that in both of the first villages where we established eating-rooms, the starostas, both of them rich peasants, proposed to have them at their houses. But as those that keep the eating-houses are guaranteed all fuel and food, we usually select the poorest, provided they live near the center of the hamlet, so that the distance to be traversed shall not be disproportionate in either direction. On the place itself we do not lay much stress, as even in a tiny six-arshin izba there is room enough to feed thirty or forty men.

The next thing to do is to get the food to each eating-room. It is managed in this way: In one place, taken as the central point of the institutions, there is arranged a storehouse of all necessary provisions. Such a storehouse was for us at first found in Rayevsky's "Ekonomia"; but as our work widened, three other storehouses were arranged, or rather selected, on the estates of wealthy landowners where there were granaries and some provisions for sale.

As soon as the location of the eating-room was selected and the persons privileged to avail themselves of it were inscribed on a list, the day was designated on which the keepers[1] of the eating-room or the cart whose turn it was should go for the provisions. As now in a large number of eating-rooms, it was a trouble to give out the provisions every day, two days each week — Tuesday and Friday — were set apart for that purpose. At the storehouse the keeper of the eating-room was given a little book or schedule in this form: —

*Credit Book for Eating-Room No.*_____

Month and Date.	At Whose House Opened.	Flour.	Bran.	Potatoes.	Cabbage.	Beets.	Oatmeal.	Wood.	Salt.	Number of Pensioners.
Nov. 20.	Lukerya Kolovaya	4 p.	2 p.	6 p.	30 heads	2 p.	1 p.	10 p.	10 lb.	

According to this book the provisions are received and entered. Besides the provisions, on a designated day from all the hamlets where the free tables are established come carts after fuel; at first this was peat, but now, as there is no more peat, firewood. On the same day the provisions are taken the loaves are made, and on the third day the eating-rooms are opened. The question as to the cooking utensils, the bowls, spoons, tables, is decided by the keepers of the rooms. Each eating-room keeper uses his own dishes. But if he has none, he gets them of those that come to him. Each person brings his own spoon.

The first eating-room was opened at the house of a blind old man who had a wife and orphan grandchildren. When, on the day it was opened, I went to this blind man's izba at eleven o'clock, the wife had everything all ready. The loaves had come out of the oven and were placed on the table and on the benches. On the stove, which was heated and closed, stood shchi, potatoes, and beet soup.

[1] *Khozyaeva.*

In the izba, besides the blind man and his wife, were two neighbors and a homeless old woman who had begged permission to come there so as to get something to eat and warm herself. There were no people as yet. It seemed that they were expecting us, and no announcements had been made. A boy and a muzhik were delegated to spread the news. I asked the woman how all would find seats.

"I will arrange it all satisfactorily, don't be troubled," said the woman.

This housekeeper was a thick-set woman of fifty, with timid and anxious, but intelligent, eyes. Until the opening of the eating-room she had begged, and had thus supported herself and her family. Her enemies declared that she drank too much. But, notwithstanding these reports, she attracted due favor by her attentions to her husband's orphan grandchildren, and to the blind old man himself, lying half dead with consumption on the sleeping-bunk.

The mother of the orphans had died the year before, the father had deserted them, and gone to Moscow, where he had disappeared. The children — a boy and a girl — were very pretty, especially the boy, who was about eight; and, notwithstanding their poverty, were well clothed and shod, and they clung to their grandmother, and kept asking things of her, as spoiled children generally do.

"All will be in good order," said the mistress of the house. "And I will get a table. And those that can't sit down may eat afterward. Nine loaves," she confided to me, "took four pounds, and moreover I squeezed out some kvas. Only I had a hard time with the peat," she said. "It doesn't heat. I had to get some of our own straw from the shed. I opened the shed, and then the peat would not burn."

As there was nothing for me to do there, I went behind the ravine to the eating-room of the next hamlet, fearing that they might be expecting me also there. And in reality they were waiting here also. And here was the same thing — the same odor of hot bread, the same round

loaves on the tables and benches, the same pots and kettles on the stove, and the same inquisitive people in the izba. In the same way the benevolent ran around to make the announcements.

Having talked with the mistress of the house, who also complained that the peat did not heat, and that she had split her trough in making the loaves, I went back to the first eating-room, thinking that I might find some misunderstanding or difficulty which might need regulating. I went to the blind man's. The izba was full of people, and was swarming with restrained motion like a beehive open on a summer night. Steam was pouring out of the door. There was an odor of bread and shchi, and the sound of eating was heard. The izba was tiny and dark with two diminutive windows, and on the outside a great heap of manure on both sides. The floor was of earth, very uneven. So dark, especially from the people obstructing the windows with their backs, that at first you could distinguish nothing.

But, notwithstanding these inconveniences and the narrow quarters, the meal was proceeding with the greatest good order. Along the front wall, at the left of the door, were two tables, around which on all sides the people eating sat in order. In the middle of the izba, from the outside wall to the stove was a bunk on which the emaciated blind man was, not lying as before, but sitting clasping his naked knees, listening to the conversation and the sounds of eating. At the right, in an empty corner before the stove door, stood the mistress of the house and her benevolent assistants. They were all watching the wants of the pensioners and serving them.

At the table in the front corner under the images stood the soldier of Nicholas's time, then an old man of the hamlet, then an old woman, then the children. At the second table nearer the stove, with their backs leaning against the wall, a pope's wife, withered looking, with children grouped around — boys and girls and the pope's daughter, a grown-up girl. On each table was a bowl of shchi, and the pensioners were taking sips of it, eating the fresh, savory bread with it. The cups of

shchi were emptied. "Eat your fill, eat your fill!" exclaimed the mistress of the house, gaily and hospitably, passing slices of bread over the heads. "There's still enough. .... To-day we have nothing but shchi and potatoes," said she to me; "there was not time for svekol'nik. We'll have it for dinner."

An old woman, scarcely alive, standing near the stove, asked me to give her some bread to carry home; she had managed to drag herself there that day, but she could not come every day, but her boy would be eating there and he could bring it to her. The mistress of the house cut her off a piece. The old woman stored it carefully away behind her apron and expressed her thanks, but she did not offer to go. The sexton's wife, a lively woman, standing near the stove and helping the mistress of the house, eloquently and vivaciously expressed her thanks for her daughter, who was also eating there, sitting near the partition, and timidly asked if she herself, the diachikha, might not eat there.

"It is long since I have tasted any pure bread; you see this is like sweet honey to us!"

Having received permission, the sexton's wife crossed herself, and crawled over the plank which was stretched from a stool to a bench. A boy, her neighbor on one side, and an old woman on the other made room and the diachikha sat down. The mistress of the house gave her bread and a spoon. After the first course of shchi, she had some potatoes. From the common salt-cellar each person took a little salt and heaped it up on the table and dipped the peeled potato into it.

All this — the service at the table and the acceptance of the food and the disposition of the people — was done with deliberation, politeness, and dignity, and at the same time in such a matter-of-fact way that it seemed as if it had always been done so, would be done so, and could not be done otherwise. There was something in it like a natural phenomenon.

Having finished his potatoes and carefully laid aside his remaining morsel of bread, the Nikolayevsky soldier was the first to get up and come out from behind the

table, and all the rest followed his example, turning to the images and saying their prayer; then uttering their thanks, they left the house. Those that were waiting their turn deliberately took their places, and the mistress again cut off the slices of bread, and once more filled up the cups with shchi.

Exactly the same thing took place at the second eating-room; the only peculiarity was that there were very many people — as many as forty — and the izba was still darker and smaller than the first. But there was the same politeness on the part of the pensioners, the same calm and joyous, somewhat proud, relation of the mistress to her work. Here a man served as master of ceremonies,[1] helping his mother, and the work went on faster.

And exactly the same thing took place at the other free tables established by us — there was the same elegance and naturalness. In some instances the zealous mistresses prepared three and even four courses: svekol'nik, shchi, pakhliobka,[2] and potatoes.

The work of the eating-rooms is accomplished with the same simplicity as many other of the muzhik's industries, in which all the details, even very complicated ones, are left to the peasants themselves. In the matter of transport, for example, in which muzhiks are employed, no employer ever bothers himself about the canvas coverings or the nails, or the linden baskets, or the buckets, and many other things essential for transport work. It is taken for granted that all this sort of thing will be provided by the peasants themselves; and in reality all this is always and everywhere uniformly and intelligently and simply done by the peasants themselves, who need no aid or direction from their employer.

Exactly the same thing occurred also at the free eating-rooms. All the details of the business were carried out by the keepers of the rooms themselves, and so

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

[2] *Svekol'nik* is a cold soup made with beets; *shchi* is a cabbage soup; *pakhliobka* is almost any kind of soup except shchi.

thoroughly and circumstantially that nothing was left for the inspector except the general business of the rooms. There were four such chief duties for the inspector of the eating-rooms to attend to: first, the getting of the provisions to a central location from which they could be distributed among the eating-rooms; secondly, care that the stores should not be wasted; thirdly, care that no persons among the most needy should be forgotten, and their places taken by those that could get along without free food; and fourthly, trial and use in the eating-rooms of new and little used means of alimentation, such as pease, lentils, millet, oats, barley, different kinds of bread, vegetables, and the like.

A sufficient number of workers furnished us with the list of people receiving rations. Some of the members of the families receiving insufficient quantity were admitted; some turned in their rations to the eating-rooms so as to have their meals there. In regard to this we were guided by the following considerations: in the uniform distribution as it was carried out in our locality, at the rate of twenty pounds to each person, we gave preference to the large families. In the insufficiency of the distribution these twenty pounds a month apiece the larger the family, the more entirely inadequate they were for the support of the people.

The theory of the free tables was therefore this: in order to open from ten to twenty eating-rooms, for the feeding of from three to eight hundred men, it is unavoidable in the center of this locality to collect the necessary provisions. In such a center there may always be the establishment of some opulent proprietor. Provisions for such a number, let us say five hundred men, will consist, — if it is proposed to keep up the eating-rooms till the season of first fruits, — reckoning by the pound of flour mixed with bran for each person for three hundred days, will be one hundred and fifty thousand pounds for five hundred persons, or three thousand seven hundred and fifty puds, or two thousand five hundred puds of rye and one thousand two hundred and

fifty of bran; the same amount of potatoes, twelve sazhens[1] of wood, a thousand puds of beets, and twenty-five puds of salt, two thousand heads of cabbage, and eight hundred puds of oatmeal.

The cost of all this at present prices amounts to fifty-eight hundred rubles. That is to say, with the increase of expense for oaten kisel at the rate of one ruble sixteen kopeks a person.

Having established such a storehouse, around it, at a distance of from seven to eight versts, one can open as many as twenty eating-rooms which will be supplied at this center. It is necessary to open the eating-rooms first of all in the very poorest of communities. It is necessary to select a place for this eating-room at the house of one of the very poorest inhabitants. The dishes and everything needed for the preparation of the food and the tables must be furnished by the person who keeps the eating-room. The list of persons admissible to the free tables must be made up with the assistance of the village starosta, and if possible of well-to-do peasants whose families are not represented among those applying for aid. The supervision of the eating-rooms, should there be very many of them, may be intrusted to the peasants themselves. But it is a matter of course that in proportion to the direct part in the matter taken by those that open the tables, the closer will be their relations both to the keepers of them and to those that frequent them, the better the business will go, the less waste of money there will be, the less dissatisfaction, the better the food, and, above all, the more cheery will be the disposition of the people.

But it may be boldly said that even under the most distant supervision, even when they are intrusted to the people themselves, the eating-rooms will satisfy great needs, and by reason of throwing the supervision on the interested parties, the needless waste of provisions will never amount to more than ten per cent, if you can call needless waste the bread which the people carry home with them, or share with those that have none.

[1] A cubic *sazhen* of wood is 2.68 cords.

Such is the plan of establishing free tables, and every one who wishes to make a trial of it will see how easily and naturally this is accomplished.

The advantages and disadvantages of the free eating-rooms are as follows: —

The first disadvantage of the free eating-rooms is that provisions in them cost a little more than in the hand-to-hand distribution of flour. If relief amounts even to thirty pounds of flour to each consumer, then in the eating-rooms you must reckon on the same thirty pounds, and besides, the soups, potatoes, beets, salt, fire, and now also oatmeal. This disadvantage, apart from the fact that the eating-rooms provide for people more than hand-to-hand distribution, has its compensation in this, that by the introduction of new, cheap, and wholesome articles of diet, such as lentils, pease in various forms, oat-kisel, beets, Indian meal kasha, sunflower and hemp oils, the quantity of bread used may be diminished and the food itself improved. A second disadvantage is that the eating-rooms keep from starvation only some of the feebler members of a family, and not the young and average peasant, who does not frequent the free table on the ground that it is humiliating for him. So that in the designation of those that are subject to support at the free tables, the peasants always exclude grown-up lads and girls on the ground that it would be disgraceful to them. This disadvantage has its compensation in the fact that precisely this sense of shame at accepting charity at the free tables prevents the possibility of misusing them. A peasant, for example, comes with the request for a share in the rations, and declares that he has not had anything to eat for two days. He is invited to come into the eating-room. His face turns red and he declines to do so, while a peasant of the same age, being left without resources and unable to find work, will take his place in the eating-room.

Or another example: a woman complains of her condition and asks rations. They propose to her that she send her daughter. But her daughter is already a promised bride, and the woman refuses to send her.

But meantime the bride-daughter of the priest's wife, of whom I have spoken, comes to the eating-room.

The third disadvantage, and the most serious, is that some of the feeble, the old, and the little ones, and very ragged children, cannot get to the eating-room, especially in bad weather. This inconvenience is obviated by neighbors or those from the same farm carrying the food to those unable to be present.

I know no other disadvantages or inconveniences.

The advantages of the free tables are the following: —

The food is incomparably better and more varied than that which is prepared in families. There is opportunity of getting food-stuffs cheaper and wholesomer. The food is provided at much cheaper rates. Fuel for baking loaves is saved. The poorest of families — those at whose houses the free tables are established — are perfectly provided for. Any possibility of inequality in receiving food, such as is often found in families in relation to unloved members, is done away with; the aged and children receive food proportioned to their needs. The eating-rooms induce kindly feelings instead of dissensions and hatred. Abuses, that is, the acceptance of help by such persons as are less needy, will be found less frequent than in any other form of help. The limits of the abuses, which can be found in taking advantage of the free tables, is confined to the capacity of a stomach. A man may carry off as much flour as he can, but no one can eat more than a very limited quantity.

And the chief and most important advantage of the eating-rooms, for which, if for nothing else, they can and should be established, is that in that community where there are free tables no man can get sick or die from the lack or wretchedness of food; nor can there be, what unfortunately is constantly happening over and over again, that an old man, feeble, a sick child, to-day, by taking poor or insufficient food, languishes, pines away, and dies, if not absolutely from hunger, yet from the lack of good food. And this is the most important.

Lately, wishing to avoid the discussions which arose when the eating-rooms were first opened, as to who should have admittance to them and who not, we took advantage, at a newly opened eating-room, of the throng that was attracted by the affair, and proposed to the peasants to decide for themselves who should be admitted. The first opinion expressed by many was that is was impossible, that there would be disputes and quarrels, and they would never come to a decision. Then the proposition was made that one person from every dvor might be admitted. But this proposition was quickly put aside. There were homes where no one would need to come, and there were others where there was not one, but several, feeble members. And therefore they agreed to accept our proposal, to leave it to their consciences.

"Places will be prepared for forty persons, and whoever comes — 'we beg your pardon, but everything is eaten up' — you won't get anything."

They accepted this plan. One said that he was a healthy, strong man, and was ashamed to come and eat up the portion of orphans. To this, however, one discontented voice replied: "You would not go away happy, no, you would go away unhappy, if, like me a little while ago, you had not had anything to eat for two days."

This very thing constitutes the chief advantage of the free tables. Any one whosoever, whether inscribed or not inscribed in the peasant society, household peasant, soldier's son, soldier of Nicholas's or Alexander's time, priest's wife, burgess, noble, old, young, or healthy muzhik, lazy or industrious, a drunkard or sober, but having gone two days without eating, would receive the food of the commune. In this is the chief advantage of the free tables. Wherever they are no one can either die of hunger or, being hungry, can be compelled to work. Everything you can think of can be a stimulus to work, but not starvation. You can train animals by starving them, and compel them to do things contrary to their nature; but it is time to realize that it is shame-

ful to compel men by starving them to do what they do not wish to do, but what we wish them to do.

But is it possible to establish eating-rooms everywhere? Is this a general measure which may be applied universally and on a great scale?

At first it would seem that it was not, that it was only a partial, local, accidental measure, which might be applied only in certain places where men were found especially adapted to this sort of thing. So I thought at first, when I imagined that for such an eating-room one would have to hire a place and a cook, to buy the dishes, to plan and to foresee what kind of food and when and for how many persons one would have to prepare; but the form of free eating-rooms which, thanks to I. I. Rayevsky, have now been established, did away with all these difficulties and made this measure most effectual, simple, and popular.

With our small resources and without special effort, we opened and started, within four weeks, in twenty localities, thirty eating-rooms at which about fifteen hundred persons got their meals. Our neighbor N—— F—— alone in the course of a month opened and is conducting in the same conditions sixteen eating-rooms at which not less than seven hundred persons are fed.

The opening of eating-rooms and superintending them present no difficulties; their support costs only a little more than the distribution of flour, if it is given out in the quantity of thirty pounds a month.[1]

This measure of establishing eating-rooms, not arousing any bad feelings in the people, but, on the contrary, perfectly satisfying them, attains the chief object which now faces society — the guaranteeing people against the possibility of dying of hunger; and, therefore, it ought to be adopted everywhere. If the authorities of the zemstvo, the guardians and the administration, can

[1] We had not yet learned by experience, but we took for granted that the support of one man at the free table would not in any case exceed one ruble fifty kopeks a month. — AUTHOR'S PARENTHETICAL NOTE IN TEXT.

persuade themselves of the need of the peasantry, and, supplying bread, give it to the needy, then incomparably the least troublesome method would be for the same people to provide *dépôts* for provisioning the free tables, and free tables as well.

A few days since we were visited by a native of Kaluga, who brought to our place the following proposition: Some of the landed proprietors and peasants of the Kaluga government, rich in feed for their cattle, sympathizing with the situation of the peasants in our region who were obliged to part with their horses at a very low price, and not likely to be able to buy them at ten times the price the following spring, proposed to take for the winter for their board ten wagons — that is to say, eighty horses — from our region. The horses should be accompanied by certain trusty men from the hamlets from which the horses were taken, to take them there and then come back. In the spring they would go for the horses and fetch them home.

The day following this proposition, in two hamlets where it was explained, all the eighty horses, all young and good, were entered for the transfer, and every day, from that time forth, peasants kept coming, begging that their horses also might be taken.

Nothing could be a stronger or more decisive answer to the question whether there is famine or not, and in what proportions. There must be great need when peasants so easily give up their horses, trusting them to strangers. Moreover this proposition and its acceptance was to me peculiarly touching and instructive. The peasants of Kaluga, not wealthy people, for the sake of brother peasants, strangers to them, people whom they had never seen, out of pity take upon themselves no small expense and labor and trouble; and the peasants of this locality, evidently understanding the impulse of their Kaluga brethren, evidently conscious that in case of need they would have done the same, without the slightest hesitation intrust to strangers almost their last possession, their good young horses, for which even at

present prices they might get as much as five, ten, or fifteen rubles.

If even a hundredth part of such vital brotherly conscience, of such unity of men in the name of God, were in all men, how easily, yet not only easily, but also joyfully, we should endure this famine and all other material misfortunes.

Byegitchevko, Dankovsky District,
December 8, 1891.

HELP FOR THE STARVING

(JANUARY, 1892)

I

THE questions, whether there is famine in Russia or not, and if there is, to what an extent, remain as yet unanswered. As an answer to them let a description of what I have seen and heard in four districts of the Government of Tula, suffering from failure of the crops, suffice.

The first district I visited was Krapivensky, which is suffering in its black earth belt.

The first impression, answering in its fundamental sense the question whether the population finds itself this year in especially trying circumstances, was the fact that the bread used by almost all was adulterated with lebeda-weed, in proportions of one-third, and in some cases one-half, lebeda, black bread of inky blackness, heavy and bitter. This bread was eaten by all — children and pregnant women and nursing mothers and sick people.

The second impression, pointing to the peculiarity of the situation this year, is the general complaint of the lack of fuel. At that time — it was still in the early part of September — people had nothing to warm themselves with. It was said that they had cut up the young sprouts on the threshing-floors, and I myself saw that; it was said they had cut down and split up for fire-wood all the posts, everything that was of wood. Many bought wood in the clearing of a proprietor's forest and in the grove which ran in that vicinity. They would go from

seven to ten versts after fire-wood. The cost of split aspen wood was ninety kopeks per shkalik, that is to say, for one-sixteenth of a cubic sazhen.[1]

The shkalik lasts a peasant's establishment about a week, so that his fuel for the winter, if he has to buy it, will stand him about twenty-five rubles.

The poverty is beyond question: the bread is unwholesome mixed with lebeda-weed, and they have no fuel. But if you look at the people and judge from externals, their faces look healthy, cheerful, and contented. All are at work; no one is at home. One is threshing, another teaming. The proprietors complain because they cannot get people to work for them. When I was there, the digging of potatoes and threshing was going on. On the church festival there was more drinking than usual, and even on working-days there was much drunkenness. Moreover, the bread itself, made with lebeda-weed, when you examine why and how it is used, receives another significance.

At the farm where I was first shown bread made with lebeda-weed, in the back-yard the man's own threshing-machine was threshing for four horses, and there were sixty ricks of oats on his own land and that which he hired, yielding at the rate of nine measures, that is to say, at the present prices three rubles.

Rye, it is true, was scarce — he had only about eight chetverts — but besides the oats he had at least forty chetverts of potatoes, and buckwheat also. Yet the whole family, consisting of twelve souls, ate lebeda-weed bread. So that it seemed that, in this case at least, the lebeda-weed bread was not a symptom of poverty, but a stern old man's measure of economy, so that they might eat less bread; since with this end in view even in plentiful years the economical muzhik never gives any warm food or even soft bread, but always stale crusts.

"Flour is high; so why should you waste it on these rascals? People eat bread made with lebeda-weed, then why should we try to be such noblemen?"

The lack of fuel finds compensation in the fact that

[1] A cubic sazhen is 2.68 cords.

this year, although there is less straw than usual, yet it is grassy, with small ears, and makes excellent fodder. That they do not use straw for fuel is not only because it is so scarce, but because this year it partly takes the place of the meal usually given to cattle.

This was so where there was any straw at all. But in many districts there was no straw at all.

The situation of the majority of the farms under a superficial observation is such that the failure of the rye crop finds its compensation in the good crop of oats, which bring a high price, and in a good crop of potatoes. They sell oats, they buy rye, and feed principally on potatoes.

But not all have oats and potatoes. When I made a list of the whole locality, it seemed that out of fifty-seven dvors there were twenty-nine where no rye was left, or only a few puds — from five to eight — and little oats, so that in an exchange at the rate of two chetverts for one chetvert of rye, there would not be enough food to last them till Christmas. Such was the case in twenty-nine dvors.

Fifteen were in a very bad condition. These dvors were bad, not from the bad harvests this year, but from the perpetual conditions of their lives, both inwardly and outwardly, from their isolation, their lack of strength, and the feebleness of the character of the housekeepers; and these have been wretched even in previous years. These dvors had not this year their principal means of support — oats, as they had no seeds and the soil was exhausted. Even now some of them are begging. Approximately as bad off are other villages of the Krapivensky District suffering from the bad harvests. The percentage of the rich, of the middling well-to-do, and of the wretched is almost one and the same: fifty-nine per cent or thereabouts of the middling well-to-do, that is to say of those who this year will eat up all their provisions by Christmas; twenty per cent of the rich, and thirty per cent of the perfectly wretched, who either now or within a month will have nothing to eat.

The situation of the peasants of the Bogoroditsky

District is worse. The harvest, especially that of rye, was worse here. Here the percentage of the rich, that is of those who can subsist on their own bread, is the same; but the percentage of the utterly destitute is greater: out of sixty dvors, seventeen middling, thirty-two utterly destitute, corresponding to the fifteen utterly destitute in the first locality of the Krapivensky District. And exactly as in the Krapivensky District, the poverty-stricken condition of these destitute dvors depended, not on the famine of this year alone, but on a whole series of both internal and external conditions long in operation, the same isolation, large families, weakness of character. ....

Here in the Bogoroditsky District the question of fuel was still more difficult to decide, as the forests were sparser. But the general impression was the same as in the Krapivensky District. As yet, there was nothing peculiar indicating famine; the people were alert, industrious, gay, healthy. The clerk of the volost complained that drunkenness in Uspenye, the chief city, was more pronounced than ever.

The farther one penetrated into the depths of the Bogoroditsky District and the nearer to the Yefremovsky, the worse grew the situation. In the threshing-floors grain and straw kept diminishing, and there were more and more abodes of destitution. On the borders of the Yefremovsky and Bogoroditsky districts the situation was particularly bad, because, in addition to all the misfortunes such as befell the Krapivensky and Bogoroditsky districts, and besides, the sparsity of forests, the potato crop had failed. There were scarcely any; even on the best soil only a return of seed was produced. In almost all families bread adulterated with lebeda-weed was used. The lebeda here failed to ripen, it was green. Of that white substance which is generally found in it, there was not a trace, and therefore it is not fit to eat. Bread of lebeda-weed it is impossible to eat alone. If it is eaten on an empty stomach it causes vomiting. People grow crazy from the kvas made from flour mixed with lebeda-weed.

Here there are poverty-stricken dvors which, having been greatly reduced in previous years, have eaten up everything.

But even this is not the worst locality. Worse ones are in the Yefremovsky and Yepifansky districts. Here is a large neighborhood in the Yefremovsky District. Out of seventy homes there are ten which are still self-supporting. The rest have just gone to begging on horseback! Those that are left eat bread mixed with lebeda-weed or with bran, which is sold to them at the storehouse of the zemstvo at the rate of sixty kopeks a pud.

I went into one house to see the bread made with bran. The muzhik had received three measures for seed, when he had already done his sowing, and mixing these three measures with three measures of bran, ground it together, and the result was sufficiently good bread, but it was his last.

The woman told me how her daughter had eaten bread made with lebeda-weed, and it had caused vomiting and diarrhea, and she had ceased to cook that kind of bread. The main room of the izba was full of horse-dung and fagots. The women go to the pasture to collect dung, and to the forest to get bits of twigs as long and as thick as their finger. The filth of the habitations, the raggedness of the clothing, in this neighborhood was very great; but it could be seen that it was nothing new, because it was the same even in the better homes. In this neighborhood there was a little cluster of ten dvors occupied by soldiers' children who had land.

At the last hovel of this cluster where we stopped, a thin, ragged woman came out to us, and began to tell us her condition. She had five children. The oldest daughter was ten. Two were sick — it must have been from the influenza. A three-year-old child was sick in a high fever, had been brought outdoors, and lay on the bare ground, on the pasture, eight paces from the hovel, and covered by the ragged remains of a cloak. It was thirsty, and would be chilly as soon as the fever passed,

but still it was better off than it would have been in the tiny hovel with a heated stove, the filth, the dust, and the other four children.

This woman's husband had gone off somewhere and disappeared. She subsisted and fed her sick children on crusts which she got by begging. But it was hard for her to beg, because her neighbors had little to give. She had to wander away twenty or thirty versts and abandon her children. If she got crusts she would remain at home, and, when they began to fail her, she would start out again.

Now she was at home. She had come that afternoon, and she had brought enough crusts to last till the next day after. In such a condition she had been for two years, and things were much worse off than they had been, because this third year she had been burnt out, and her eldest girl was away, so that there was no one with whom to leave the little ones. The only difference was that they kept eating more and more of the bread mixed with lebeda-weed. And she was not the only one as bad off. In this condition, not only this year, but always, are all the families of weak, drinking men, all families of those in jail. Such a state of things is more easily borne in good years.

II

THERE are many such neighborhoods as this, both in the Bogoroditsky and the Yefremovsky districts. But there are still worse ones. And such neighborhoods are found in the Yepifansky and Dankovsky districts.

Here is one of them. Along the six versts from one locality to the other there is no village or habitation — only the farms of proprietors are to be seen. Between steep banks, a large beautiful river; on both sides, settlements. On one side that belonging to the Yepifansky District, the smaller; on the other that belonging to the Dankovsky, the larger. Yonder is a church with a bell-tower, and a cross glittering in the sun. Along

the hill on this side extend, in the distance, the pretty little houses of the peasants.

I approach the edge of the settlement on this side. The first izba is not an izba, but four stone walls, of gray stone laid in clay, covered with a ceiling on which are spread potato leaves. There is no yard.[1] This is the dwelling of the first family. There, in the middle of this residence, stands a cart without wheels; and not back of the yard where the threshing-floor generally is, but directly in front of the izba, is a small cleared place, called a *tok*, where the oats are threshed and winnowed. A tall muzhik in bark shoes, with a shovel and his hands, is shoveling the newly winnowed oats from a pile into plaited seed-baskets; a barefooted peasant woman of fifty, in a filthy black skirt torn at the side, is carrying these baskets away and setting them into the wheelless cart, and keeping count. An unkempt little girl of seven, in a skirt gray with grime, clings to the woman, hampering her. The muzhik is the woman's neighbor, who has come over to help her winnow and garner the oats. The woman is a widow; her husband has been dead two years, and her son has gone to the army for the autumn drill. In the ibza is the daughter-in-law with her two little children, one a baby at the breast, the other, two years old, with bare legs, is sprawling on the threshold and screaming — something discontents him.

The whole harvest of this year consists of oats, all of which is stored in the cart, and amounts to four chetverts — about twenty-three bushels. Of rye, for seed, there remained, carefully stored away in the *pun'ka*, or grain-closet, one bag mixed with lebeda-weed — about three puds. No millet, no buckwheat, no lentils, no potatoes, had been planted or sowed. The bread they used was made with lebeda-weed, and it was so bad it was impossible to eat it; and on the morning of this particular day, the woman had gone begging to the village — eight versts. In the village it was a festival, and she had collected five pounds of pieces of pirog free of the lebeda-weed. She showed it to me. In a linden-bark basket

[1] *Dvor.*

were collected four pounds of crusts and pieces as big as one's palm. This was her whole property and all her visible means of support.

Another izba was the same, only a little better protected and had a small court. The crop of rye was the same. The same bag with lebeda-weed stood in the entry and represented the granary with stores. At this place they had not sowed oats at all, as they had had no seed in the spring. They had three chetverts of potatoes and there were two measures of millet. To the rye which was left over from the distribution for seed, the woman had added an equal quantity of lebeda-weed, and they were using it for food. A slice and a half of it was left. With potatoes, they said they might get along for a month, but what remained for them after that they did not know. The woman had four children and a husband. The husband, when I was at the izba, was not at home. He had built the hut, laying the stone in clay. He was at a neighbor's at the next dvor.

The third place was the same, the condition the same. While I was there and talking with the mistress of the establishment, another woman came in and began to relate to her neighbor how her husband had been beaten, how she did not expect to have him live, and how they had administered the last communion to him that morning. Evidently the neighbor knew it all long before, and it was repeated for my benefit. I proposed to come and look at the ailing man and help him, if there was any possible way. The woman went out and speedily returned to show me the way. The sick man lay in the next izba. This izba was large, timbered, with a stone *pun'ka*, or grain-room, and a yard. But the destitution was the same. The owner, evidently, had been tempted to build after a fire. That is all he had done. He had built, then he had taken sick and been reduced to beggary. Two other families, unrelated and homeless, had lodgings in this izba. The head of one of these families was also stricken with illness.

On a bunk between the stove and the wall lay the sick man, covered with a corn-cloth, and groaning piteously.

I went to him and cautiously turned back the covering. He was a thick-set, healthy muzhik of forty, with a bloodstained face and well-developed muscles on his bare arm. I proceeded to question him, and he, striving to groan, in a feeble voice told me that three days before they had held a reunion and he and a comrade had taken *billets*, passports, to go down the river, and then he had told one of the muzhiks that he ought not to swear; and in reply to this the muzhik had knocked him down and "walked all over him"; that is, had given him a regular trouncing, striking him on his head and on his chest. It seemed that, having taken out their passports, they had bought liquor on shares; and then the former starosta, squandering fifty rubles of the commune's funds, treated them to one-half a *vedro*, or bucket, because they postponed the payment for three terms, and the peasants got drunk.

I felt of the wounded man and examined him. He was perfectly well, and was perspiring powerfully under his covering. There were no marks on him, and evidently he was in bed and they had given him the Holy Communion in order to induce the authorities, one of whom he supposed me to be, to inflict punishment on the man with whom he had quarreled. When I told him that he need not be tried, and that I thought he was not dangerously beaten and might get up, he remained discontented, and the women, who had attentively followed me and filled the izba to overflowing, began with displeasure to remark that, if that were so, then *they* would beat them all to death.

The poverty of all these three families living here was as absolute as in the first dvors. No one had any rye. One had two pounds of buckwheat; another had enough potatoes to last a fortnight or a month. All had still a little bread made of rye mixed with lebeda-weed, but not enough to last any length of time.

The people were almost all at home. One was plastering his house, another was rebuilding his, another was sitting still, doing nothing. All the threshing had been done; the potatoes were all dug.

Such was the whole village of thirty places, with the exception of two families which were in easy circumstances. This village had been half burned down the year before, and had not been rebuilt. The first dvor, with the woman threshing oats, and eight others had been immediately settled in a new place on the outskirts, so as to fulfil the rules of insurance. The majority are so poor that, so far, they are living in lodgings. In the same condition of feebleness are also those that had not been burnt out, though those that had been burnt out are, on the whole, rather worse off. The condition of the village is such, that out of thirty dvors twelve have no horses.

The village is in destitute condition, but it is evident that the failure of this year's harvest is not the principal misfortune. In almost every family, its special cause is something far more significant than the misfortune of this year's crop.

The misfortune of the former starosta is that he has to pay fifty rubles in three instalments, and he is selling all his oats to pay this debt. The present starosta, an excellent carpenter, had the special misfortune that he had been appointed to that office and cannot go out to work. His salary is fifteen rubles a year, and he declares that he could easily earn sixty, and would not mind the failure of the harvest.

A third muzhik has the misfortune of having got into debt long ago, and now the time to pay it has come, and he has been obliged to sell the three walls of his wooden izba, leaving himself one for fuel. Now he has nothing to live in, and he is constructing for himself, out of stone, a tiny cell in which he will live with his wife and children.

A fourth has the misfortune of having quarreled with his mother, who had been living with him, and she has left him, dismantled her izba, and gone to another son, taking her share with her. And he had nowhere to live and nothing to live on.

Still a fifth has the misfortune of having gone to the city with oats, where, in a spree, he had spent for drink

all that he got for his oats. The universal, chronic causes of poverty are also many times more powerful than the poor crops. As always, conflagrations, quarrels, drunkenness, low spirits. ....

Before taking my departure from the village, I stopped near one who had just brought from the field some potato vines — *botovya* they call them — and who was piling them up against the walls of his izba. Quickly six muzhiks also came up, and we had a talk. Their women stood listening at a little distance. Children munching inky black, sticky bread made with lebeda-weed were running around us, gazing at me, and trying to catch a word. I repeated several questions, crediting the starosta's testimony. It all seemed credible. Even the number of those without horses proved to be greater than the starosta had claimed. They related the whole story of their poverty, not with any satisfaction, but with a certain irony. "Why is it that you are so wretched; have you become poorer than other people?" I asked.

Several answered at once in various voices, so definite was the reply.

"But what shall we do? In the summer half the village was burned up as a cow licks dew with her tongue. And then the crop failed. And the summer was bad, and now to-day we are all cleaned out."

"Well, how are you going to live?"

"We shall live all right. We shall sell what we have, and then whatever God gives."

What does this mean? Can it be that these men do not in reality understand their condition, or do they so hope for aid from outside that they do not want to put forth any effort? I may be mistaken, but it seems like this.

And here I remembered two somewhat intoxicated old muzhiks of the Yefremovsky District, who were coming from the volost headquarters, where they had gone to ask when they would employ their sons for the autumn drill; and at my question how their harvest had been and how they got along, they replied, notwithstand-

ing that they were from the very wretchedest locality, that, glory to God, they had distributed seed for sowing, and now they would continue to distribute grain also for provisions, till Lent at the rate of thirty pounds a man, and after Lent at the rate of a pud and a half. Why, the fact that the people of this Yefremovsky village cannot live through the winter unless they undertake something, is as palpable as that a hive of bees without honey, left for the winter, will die before spring. But this is the very question: Shall they undertake anything or not? So far it is likely that they will not. Only one of them sold all that he had and went to Moscow. The rest apparently do not realize their situation. Do they really not comprehend their situation, or are they waiting for help from outside, or do they, like children who have slipped into an ice-hole or lost their way, in the first moment, not comprehending all the dangers of their situation, find amusement in its unusualness? Maybe both are true. But it is unquestionable that these people are in a condition where they make scarcely any effort to help themselves.

III

Well, then, is there famine or is there not famine? And if there is, in what degree? And in what degree must help be given? All the columns in which the possessions of the peasants are entered give no answer, and can give no answer, to these questions.

Many represent to themselves the task of feeding the starving people exactly as they will represent to themselves the same task of feeding a given number of cattle. For so many oxen they need for two hundred winter days so many puds of hay, straw, malt, grain. They get ready this amount of feed, furnish it for the herd of cattle, and have the assurance that the creatures will weather the winter. With human beings the calculation is entirely different.

In the first place, for the ox and all kinds of cattle, the minimum and maximum of indispensable food are

not very far separate from each other. Having eaten their necessary amount of feed, cattle cease to eat, and that is all that is required for them; but if they do not have all they need, they soon sicken and die.

For a human being the difference between the minimum and the maximum of what he requires — not only as regards food, but other necessities also — is enormous. A man may live on wafers like the fasters, on a handful of rice like the Chinese, may go without food for forty days like Dr. Tanner, and preserve his health; and he may swallow down enormous quantities of costly and nutritious food and drink, and besides this bodily sustenance he requires many things besides, which may wax to great proportions and be limited to very narrow ones.

In the second place, the ox in the stall cannot earn its own feed; while a man does earn his food, and that man whom we are proposing to feed is the chief earner of food, the very one who in the most difficult conditions earns what we are preparing to feed him with. To feed a muzhik is just the same as in springtime, when the grass is pushing and the cattle can already crop it, to keep the creatures in the stall and pull up this grass for them; in other words, to deprive the herd of that enormous power of crop-gathering, and thereby ruin it.

Something analogous would happen with the muzhik if we proceeded to feed him in the same way, and he should believe in this.

The muzhik's budget does not meet the requirements — there is a deficit, he has nothing to live on — he must be fed.

Now, if you feed every average muzhik, not in a famine year, but in an ordinary year, when as in our localities, in these very localities where there is famine, often the grain from the allotted land will not last till Christmas, you will see that in ordinary years, according to the returns of the harvest, he will have nothing to live upon, and the deficit will be such that he will infallibly have to kill his cattle and have only one meal a day himself. Such is the budget of the average muzhik — of the destitute there is nothing to be said; but, lo! he not only

does not kill his cattle, but he has married off his son or his daughter, celebrated a festival, and smoked up five rubles' worth of tobacco.

Who has not seen conflagrations that cleaned everything up? It would seem as if the sufferers were utterly ruined. Lo, and behold! one is helped by a kinsman, an uncle; some one furnishes a jug, another takes a place as a laborer and another goes a-begging; much energy is put out, and lo! within two years they are no worse off than they were before.

But how about emigrants, who go with their families, subsisting for years on their labor while lacking any definite place of settlement? At one time I was occupied with the question of a former settlement of the Samara border. And it is a fact, which all the old inhabitants of Samara can substantiate, that the majority of the emigrants who were assisted as they came along the main traveled roads went to ruin and poverty, while the majority of the deserters reached their journey's end, and settled down successfully, and became rich. But how about landless peasants, household servants, soldiers' children? All have been supported, and are supported, even in years when bread was higher than it is now. They say there is no work. But here are others who keep saying that they have work to offer, but there are no workmen. And the men who say this are just as correct, or just as incorrect, as those that complain that there is no work. I know definitely that proprietors have offered work but no laborers came; that, to the work furnished by the forestry commission, so far, no laborers appeared; and this is true also of other undertakings described in the newspapers.

For a miserable workman there is never any work, but for a good workman there is always work. It is true this year there is less work than usual, and therefore more poor workmen remain without work; but still, whether a man has work or not depends, not on any external causes, but on the workman's energy — on whether he seeks work wisely, is eager for work, and works well.

I say all this, not for the purpose of proving that we ought not to help miserable workmen and their families, — on the contrary, they need help most of all, — but only to show how impossible it is to reckon the budget of a peasant's home, the income of which may be stretched from three to thirty and more rubles a month, according to the peasant's energy in seeking and satisfying employment, while the outgo may be curtailed to two pounds of meal a day with bran for each person, and wasted in a luxury capable of ruining the richest muzhik in a year's time.

The difference of opinion as to whether there is famine or not, and to what a degree, arises from the fact that as a basis for estimating the peasant's situation they take his property, whereas the chief items of his budget are determined, not by his property, but his labor.

In order to determine the degree of poverty which might be taken as a guide in distributing aid, there were placed in all the zemstvos throughout the volost'-districts specific inventories containing lists of consumers, laborers, land allotments; the quality of different grains sowed, and the crops, the number of cattle, the average harvest, and many other things. These lists were made up with an extraordinary wealth of columns and particulars. But any one who knows the peasants' ways of housekeeping, knows that these lists tell very little. To think that the peasant household receives only what it gets from the allotted land, and spends only on what it eats, is a great mistake. In the majority of cases what is got from the allotted land constitutes only a small part of what it receives. The peasant's chief wealth is what he and his household earn by working — whether they earn it on hired land, or by laboring for some proprietor, or by living out at service, or by various vocations. Why, the muzhik and his family all are working always. The condition of physical idleness is misery for the muzhik. If there is not work enough for all the members of the muzhik's family, if he himself and his people are eating, but not working, he con-

siders that he has reached absolute poverty, just as if from a shrunken keg the wine leaks, and generally by all possible means he seeks and always finds some way of warding off this poverty — he finds work. In a muzhik's family all the members work from childhood to old age, and support themselves by work. A lad of twelve already earns something as a shepherd-boy or in the care of horses; the little girl spins and knits stockings or little mittens; the muzhik goes out to service either at some distant provincial city, or works as a day laborer, or works on shares for some proprietor, or himself hires land; the old man plaits bark shoes, and that is a very common resource.

Then besides, there are extraordinary cases: a lad leads the blind, a girl gets a place as a nurse with some rich muzhik, a boy is taken to learn a trade, the muzhik presses bricks or makes seed baskets, the woman practises as a midwife or as a doctor, a blind brother begs, one who has got learning reads the psalter for the dead, the old man rubs tobacco, some widow sells vodka. Moreover a peasant's son may get a place as a coachman, a conductor, an *uryadnik*, or village policeman; or his daughter may become a chambermaid or a nurse; another's uncle becomes a monk or an overseer, and all these relations take hold and help support the establishment. From such items, not entered on the lists, comes the principal income of a peasant's family.

The items of expenditure are still more varied, and are by no means confined to provisions: taxes of various kinds, regulation of army service, firearms, blacksmith work, plowshares, bolts, wheels, axes, forks, parts of harnesses and carts, buildings, stoves, clothing, footgear for himself and his children, holidays, the sacraments for himself and his family, weddings, christenings, funerals, doctor's hire, gifts for his children, tobacco, kitchen utensils, dining-room ware, salt, tar, kerosene, pilgrimages.

Every man, moreover, has his own peculiarities of character, his weaknesses, his charities, his vices, which cost him money. In the very poorest families of five

or six souls, from fifty to seventy rubles a year, in an opulent family from seventy to three hundred, in an average family from one hundred to one hundred and twenty, are thus involved. And every householder can without very much increase of energy make this hundred rubles' income one hundred and fifty, and by some slackening of energy reduce it from one hundred to fifty, and by economy and close calculation reduce a hundred rubles of expenditure to sixty, and by slackness and inefficiency increase it from a hundred to two hundred.

How then in these circumstances reckon the budget of a muzhik, and decide the question whether he is suffering from poverty or not, and to what a degree, and if he is, to decide which of them is to be helped and how much?

In the zemstvos inspectors have been appointed — persons whose duty it was to administer the distribution of help among the volost'-districts. In one of the zemstvos there have been instituted councils held by the inspectors, — of priests, the *starshina*, or head man of the village, the ecclesiastical starosta, and to delegates, — and these were to decide who were to be helped. But even these councils could not help in the matter of distribution, because, according to the lists and what is now known of peasant families, it is impossible to tell in advance those who will be needy; and therefore regularly to determine gratuitous assistance for the people is not merely difficult, but quite impossible.

Many think that if only the wealthy would give the poor a part of their riches, all would be beautiful. But this is a great mistake. Try to give money to the poor in the city, and they will try even this. And what will be the result?

Seven years ago in Moscow, by the will of a deceased tradesman, six thousand rubles were distributed among the poor, giving two to each. Such a crowd collected that two were crushed to death, and the largest part of the money got into the hands of healthy pleaders, while the poor and the weak got nothing.

The same thing results and will result also in the country, and wherever money is distributed as a gratuity. It is generally thought that all it requires is to distribute it, but to distribute and to determine is not easy. Let us allow, they generally think, that there are abuses and deceptions, but we must be on the lookout for such, take care to investigate, and then one can get rid of those that do not need, and give only to the destitute.

In this also there is an error. The essence of the matter is such that it cannot be done. To distribute gratuitous help among the needy only is impossible because there are no external marks whereby one could determine the needy, and the distribution of gratuities itself elicits the most evil passions, so that even those signs which were, are annihilated.

The administration and the zemstvo are engaged in trying to find out those that are really needy. All muzhiks, even those that are not at all destitute, knowing that there is going to be a gratuitous distribution, try to seem destitute, and even make themselves so, in order to get help without working for it. All are aware that to gain by means of labor is good and praiseworthy — without labor is bad and shameful. And suddenly appears a method of obtaining without labor and free from anything reprehensible. Evidently such a confusion in ideas is produced by the appearance of this new way of getting.

But how can we wait when they are dying of starvation? Here in the country, where there is no grain till next November, and where, through laziness, errors of judgment, or what not, the muzhiks declare there is no work and they are not working; within a week's time unquestionably actual starvation confronts the women, the aged, and the young, and possibly the laziest and most mistaken, but actually living people.

Evidently it is impossible not to give; but if we give, how shall we give, to whom shall we give?

If we give to all as the peasants everywhere demand, claiming, with reason, that they must be answered by a reciprocal bond, then it is necessary at least to give to

all in equal shares, so that there may be something to answer for. If we give to all in equal shares and enough so as to furnish all the destitute with sustenance, of course it would require not far from a milliard of rubles, a sum which evidently it is impossible to find. If it was distributed to all, a little at a time, then for the rich it would be an unnecessary addition, and for the poor not enough to save them from ruin. If we give only to the destitute, then the question is how to distinguish those that are really destitute from those that are not destitute at all.

The main thing is that the more is given the less the people will work for themselves, and the less they work the more their poverty will increase.

And it is impossible to help! What is to be done, then?

IV

If a man in society really wants to help the people, the first thing that he must do is clearly to comprehend his relation to them. When we have once come to understand our true relationship to them, we cannot begin to serve them in any other way than by ceasing to do what harms them.

My idea is that only love will save the people from all their misfortunes, including famine. Love cannot be defined in a word, but is always expressed in deeds. The deeds of love in relation to the starving consists in sharing one's morsel with them.

And therefore I think that the best thing that can be done now for the help of the destitute consists in settling in the midst of the starving, and living with them.

I do not say that every one who wishes to help the starving must immediately go and settle in an unwarmed izba, feed on bread made with lebeda-weed, and die within two months or two weeks, or that every one who does not do this does not do anything helpful. I say that the nearer a man comes to doing this the better it will be for

him and for others, but that any one does well who approaches this ideal.

There are two extremes: one is to give one's life for one's friends; the other is to live on without changing the conditions of one's life.

All men, who comprehend that the means of helping those that are now starving consists in overthrowing the barriers separating us from the people, and consequently who change their lives, unavoidably, according to the measure of their moral and physical powers, are distributed between these two extremes. Some, going into the country, so arrange their lives that they will live and eat and sleep together with the destitute; others will live and eat separately, but will establish eating-rooms and work in them; still others will help by distributing food and grain; others again will give money; a fifth class — I can imagine these — will live in a starving village, spending their income there, only occasionally helping the poverty which will once in a while be brought to their notice.

"Whether the people, the whole people, shall be supported or not supported, I do not know and I cannot know," — a man looking at it from this standpoint will say to himself. "To-morrow a pestilence or an invasion may befall us, and the people will die, but not from starvation; or to-morrow some new form of sustenance may be discovered which will feed every one; or — what is more likely — I may die to-morrow myself, and I shall know nothing of whether the people are to be fed or not fed. The main thing is that no one appoints me superintendent of the task of feeding forty millions of the people living in such extremes, and I evidently cannot attain the external aim of feeding all these people and safeguarding them from misfortunes; but am appointed over my own soul in order to lead my life as near as possible to what my conscience inculcates, and I can do only one thing — as long as I live, I can employ my powers for the service of my brethren, considering as my brethren all without exception."

And, wonderful to relate, a man has only to turn

from the task of solving these external problems, and put to himself the only true internal question peculiar to man — how best to live during this year of painful experience — and all these questions receive their very wisest solution.

External activity, setting for its object the feeding and maintaining the prosperity of forty millions of men, as we have seen, meets in its way certain obstacles with difficulty overcome: —

(1) To determine the degree of the actual need for the population, able to manifest in this supporting of themselves the greatest energy and absolute apathy, is out of the bounds of possibility.

(2) If it is granted that this determination is possible, then the amount of the money required and of the grain is so great that there is no likelihood of obtaining them.

(3) If it is granted that these sums will be supplied, then the gratuitous distribution of money and grain among the population will slacken the energy and self-reliance of the people, and these, more than anything else, have the possibility of upholding their prosperity in these trying times.

(4) If it is granted that the distribution will be promoted in such a way as not to enfeeble the self-reliance of the people, then there is no possibility of regularly determining the assistance, and those that do not need will grasp the share of those that do need, so that the majority of them will still remain without help and will perish.

The activity, however, which has the internal aim for the soul, and always united with sacrifice, avoids these obstacles, and attains enormous results not allowed by the other form of activity.

This is the activity which this year of famine — as I have seen more than once in these famine-stricken places — causes a peasant woman, the mistress of a house, at the words *Khrista radi*, — "for Christ's sake," — heard under her window, to shrug her shoulders, to knit her brows, and then after all to get down from the

shelf her last loaf, already begun, and cut from it a slice, and, crossing herself, give it.

For this activity the first obstacle does not exist — the impossibility of separating the destitution from the destitute. "Mavra's orphans" beg in Christ's name. She knows that they have nowhere to get anything, and she gives.

Neither does the second obstacle exist — the enormous multitude of the needy. The needy always have been and still are. The question is merely how much of my own resources I can give to them. The mistress of a house giving alms does not need to reckon how many millions are starving in Russia, or what is the price of wheat in America, how much at our ports and at our grain elevator, and how much may be taken under warrant. For her there is one question: how to put the knife through the loaf, cutting off a thick slice or a thin one; but whether thin or thick, she gives it, and firmly, assuredly, knows that if each one takes from his own, there will be enough for all, however much is needed.

The third obstacle still less exists for the mistress of the house. She is not afraid that the giving of this morsel will enfeeble the energy of "Mavra's children," and encourage them to idleness and constant beggary, because she knows that even these tramps understand how valuable to her is the slice which she cuts off for them.

Neither is there a fourth obstacle. The mistress of the house has no occasion to vex her mind over the question whether it is right to give to those that are standing now under her window, whether there are not others more needy to whom she ought to give that slice. She pities "Mavra's children" and she gives to them, and knows that if all will do the same thing, then no one will ever die of hunger either in Russia or anywhere else in the world.

Only such activity always has saved, saves, and will save men. This is the kind of activity that must be adopted by men who wish to serve others in this present time of adversity.

This activity saves men because it is the smallest seed of all, and grows into the tallest of trees. So insignificant is what one, two, or a dozen men can do, living in the country among the starving, and helping them according to the measure of their ability. But this is what I saw in my journey.

Some boys were leaving Moscow, where they had been working. And one was taken sick and fell behind his companions. He had been waiting for five hours, and was lying on the edge of the road, and a dozen muzhiks passed him. Among those that were passing was one peasant with a potato, and he asked the sick youth some questions, and finding that he was sick, took compassion on him and carried him to his village.

"Who is that?" "Whom has Akim brought?"

Akim told that the lad was sick, that he had been fasting, and had eaten nothing for two days — he could not help pitying him.

Then one woman brought some potatoes, another a patty, a third some milk.

"Akh! dear heart, he has been starving. Why, of course we pity him. He's only a boy!"

And this very lad by whom, notwithstanding his wretched appearance, a dozen men had passed without taking pity on him, became an object of pity to all, dear to all, because one had taken pity on him.

Loving activity gains its importance from the fact that it is contagious. External activity expressed in gratuitous gifts of grain and money, according to descriptions and lists, calls forth the worst emotions: greediness, hatred, deception, unkind criticism; private activity calls forth, on the contrary, the best sentiments: love and the desire of sacrifice.

"I have worked, I have struggled, they give me nothing; but they give a reward to that lazy dog, that drunkard! Who told him to get drunk? The thief deserves all he gets!" says the rich and the average muzhik to whom they refuse assistance.

With no less anger speaks the poor man of the rich who demands an equal share: —

"We are the poor ones. They suck us dry, and then give them our share. They are so mean," and the like.

Such feelings are elicited by the distribution of gratuitous assistance. But, on the contrary, if one sees how another is sharing with a neighbor, is working for an unfortunate, one has the desire to do likewise. In this lies the strength of loving activity. Its strength is that it is contagious, and, as soon as it becomes contagious, then there is no limit to its spread.

As one candle kindles another, and thousands are lighted from that one, so also one heart inflames another and thousands are set a-glowing. Millions of rubles will do less than will be done by even a small diminution of greediness and increase of love in the mass of the people. If only the love is multiplied — then the miracle is accomplished which was performed at the distribution of the five loaves. All are satisfied, and still much remains.

I will say more definitely how this activity presents itself to me. A person from the rich classes, wishing this trying year to share in the general poverty of these people, comes to one of the suffering localities and begins to live there. Spending there on the spot, in the Lukoyanovsky or Yefremovsky district, in a starving village, the tens of thousands, thousands, or hundreds, of rubles which he usually spends every year, he consecrates his leisure, employed by him in the city on amusements, in some activity for the advantage of the starving people, according to his abilities. The very one fact that he is living there and expending there what he usually spends in the city, brings a material help to the people. And the fact that he is to live in the midst of this people, even without self-sacrifice but with disinterestedness, already brings a moral advantage to him and to the people.

Evidently a person coming to a starving locality for the purpose of being of advantage to the people cannot be limited by the fact of living only for his own pleasure amid a starving population. I imagine to myself such a person — man or woman or a family with mode-

rate means, let us say with a thousand rubles a year — coming in this way to a locality where the crops had failed. This person or family hires or buys from some proprietor of his acquaintance a habitation, or selects and hires an izba, settles down in it according to his circumstances and demands, with the intention of bearing the inconveniences of life, lays in fuel, provisions, provides himself with horses, fodder, and the like. All this means bread for the people, but this cannot limit the relation of this family or this person to the people.

To the kitchen come beggars with wallets; and one must give to them. The cook regrets that the bread is mostly gone. She must either refuse them their crusts, or bake new loaves. An extra supply of bread is baked; more people begin to come. From families where the bread is gone and there is nothing to eat, they come asking for help; here again they must give. Their own cook proves not to be able to do the work. And the oven is small. They have to hire an izba for baking, and hire a special cook. This costs money. They have no money. But the family settling there have friends or acquaintances who know that they have settled in a destitute locality. The friends who know them send them money, and the work is broadened and grows. Bread is distributed from the hired izba. But some people come for bread and sell it. Cheating begins. And in order that there may be no temptation to take advantage of the bread distributed, instead of distributing it they give it to be eaten on the premises by those that come for it. They cook soups and oatmeal; an eating-room is established.

It seems to me that such eating-rooms as these places, where those that come may get fed, is the form of help which develops itself from the relations of the rich to the starving and brings the greatest advantage. This form more than all calls forth the direct activity of the helper, more than all unites him to the population, less than anything else brings about abuses, and gives the opportunity with the smallest means of feeding the greatest number of people.

In the Dankovsky and Yepifansky districts such eating-rooms were opened in September. The people called them the "Orphans' Aids," and apparently this very name prevented any abuse of these institutions. A healthy muzhik, with some opportunity of supporting himself, will not come to these eating-rooms, to eat up the orphans' food, and as far as I could observe regarded it as a shameful thing to do. Here is a letter which I received from a friend of mine, an agent of the zemstvo and one who lives constantly in the country, in regard to the efficacy of these "orphans' aids."

"Six '*orphans*' *aids*' have been opened not more than ten days, and already about two hundred persons have fed at them. The manager of the eating-rooms, with the advice of the village starosta, has to use his discretion in admitting persons to the latter — so many needy ones present themselves. It seems that the peasants do not let their whole families come, but that the destitute families send their candidates — almost exclusively old women and children. Thus, for example, the father of six children in the village of Pashkovo sent two of them to be admitted, and two days later brought still a third. The starosta said that it was particularly desirable to keep a sharp eye on them, as the stronger boys especially liked beet soup. The same starosta told me that sometimes the mothers would bring their children, they would fib, saying it was to encourage them, but if he looked around they would eat something. When you hear these words of the starosta, then you understand that it is not a lie, and that it is impossible to think so. Can it be that the famine has not touched them yet? We of course know that the wolf is at the door; but it is a pity that this wolf is simultaneously threatening so many families — may he not get hold of our resources! The calculation shows that each consumer gets away with one pound of bread and one pound of potatoes a day; but in addition to this must be reckoned fuel and all sorts of trifles — salt, onions, beets, and the like. Fuel gives more trouble than anything else, it represents in itself more expense for materials. The peasants have arranged

to take turns in sending their teams after provisions. The organization demands an active man and a careful economical storing of provision; the 'orphans' aids' *do not need* any supervision of the distribution of provisions: the mistress of the establishment is so used to living on crumbs, and all the partakers so carefully follow what goes on at the tables, that the slightest negligence would be instantly noised abroad and therefore it would correct itself. I have had dug two new cellars and in them stored three hundred chetverts of potatoes, but this supply is very small, since the demand is increasing every day. It would seem that the help had fallen in a very necessary moment. A man is appointed in charge of six eating-rooms, but time enlarges the circle of the activity of the free tables, and the limit has not been reached.

"I think how comfortable will be the work in the dining-rooms; here you experience a delight in pouring water over the thirsty plant; what ought to be the rapture in every day feeding hungry children!"

I feel that this form of activity is convenient and feasible, but I repeat that this form does not include all other forms. Persons living in the country will have a chance to help with money, and grain, and flour, and bread, and horses, and food pure and simple.

All it needs is to be men! And such men really there are. I have been in four districts, and in each there were people ready for this activity, and in some already beginning it.

UNPRINTED CONCLUSION[1]

OUR two years' experience in distributing among the needy population the contributions that came into our hands, more than anything else confirmed our long-established conviction that the chief part of the need, the privation, and the consequent suffering and sorrow, which we almost vainly tried by external methods to combat in one little corner of Russia, proceeded not from any exclusive, temporal causes independent of us, but from the most universal, constant causes, wholly dependent on ourselves, — causes found only in the anti-Christian, unfraternal relationship which we men of culture hold toward the poor, the working-men, those who everywhere endure this poverty and deprivation, and the suffering and affliction which merely have been accentuated more than usual during the last two years.

If this year we may not hear about the poverty, cold, and famine, the death of grown men and women, worn out by excessive labor, and of insufficiently nurtured old people and children by the hundreds of thousands, this results, not from the fact that this state of things does not exist, but from the fact that we shall not see it, we shall forget about it, we shall persuade ourselves that it is not so, or if it is, that it is a necessary condition of things and cannot be otherwise.

But this is untrue; it is not only not necessary, but it ought not to be, and it will cease to be, and it will soon cease to be.

However well concealed may seem to us the cup of wine from before the working-people, however clever, long-established, and universally accepted the arguments

[1] From Geneva edition.

whereby we justify our luxurious life amid the working-people, tormented with labor, and half fed, and servants to this luxury of ours, the world will more and more penetrate our relationship to the people, and we shall speedily appear in that disgraceful and dangerous position in which the criminal finds himself when the morning light, unexpectedly to him, overtakes him on the scene of his crime.

If it were possible beforehand for the merchant who sold the working-people the unnecessary and often harmful and unprofitable wares, striving to take as much as possible, or at least the good bread so needful to the laborer, buying it at low prices and selling it at high prices, to say that he served the needs of the people in honorable trade; or the manufacturer of calicoes, of mirrors, of cigarettes, or the seller of spirits or beer, to say that he was feeding the people by giving them wages; or for the functionary who receives a salary of thousands, collected from the last kopeks of the people, to persuade himself that he is working for the advantage of the people; or — what in these last years has been especially manifest in places attacked by the famine — if it had been possible for the owner of the land, for a rent less than the price of bread, letting his land to the starving peasants, or giving this land to the same peasants for a price put to uppermost notch, to say that he, in conducting a perfected agriculture, is working for the advantage of the rural population; then, now, when the people are dying of hunger from lack of land, though the proprietors have such enormous holdings around them planted with potatoes, sold for spirits or for starch, — then this could not be said.

Amid this people, degenerating from lack of food and from excessive labor on all sides of us, it is impossible not to see that all our absorption of the fruits of the people's labor on the one hand deprives them of what is essential for their sustenance, on the other adds in the highest degree to the strain of their labor. To say nothing of the insensate luxury of parks, flower-gardens, hunting expeditions, every glass of vodka swallowed,

every lump of sugar, every piece of butter or of meat, represents so much food taken from the mouths of the people, and so much labor added to their share.

We Russians in this respect are in the most favorable conditions clearly to see our situation.

I remember how once, long before the famine years, there happened to be visiting me in the country a morally sensitive young savant from Prague; and as we came out one winter's day from the hovel of a comparatively well-to-do muzhik, in which we had been calling, and in which, as everywhere, there was a woman, half worked to death and prematurely old, dressed in rags, a child sick with a rupture crying for her, and, as everywhere else in the spring, a calf fastened, and a lambing sheep, and filth and dampness — I remember how, as we came out, my young acquaintance tried to say something, and suddenly his voice broke and he burst into tears. He for the first time, after some months spent in Moscow and Petersburg, — where, as he walked along the asphalted sidewalks past luxurious shops, from one rich house to another, from one magnificent museum and library, palaces and buildings each more magnificent than the other, — for the first time he saw those people whose labor is the basis of all this luxury, and it horrified him and amazed him.

He, in his rich and learned Bohemia, as well as every European, especially every Swede, Swiss, or Belgian, may imagine, though he may be wrong, that there, where there is relative freedom, where education is widely diffused, where every one has the opportunity of entering the ranks of the cultured, luxury is only a legitimate reward of labor, and does not destroy the lives of others. Somehow one may forget about those generations of men working in the mines for the sake of producing a large part of the objects of one's luxury; may forget, not seeing them, those other races of men who in distant colonies are perishing, working for our caprices; but for us Russians there is no excuse for having these notions; the bond between our luxury and the sufferings and privations of

the people who are of one race with us is too manifest, we cannot help seeing the price, paid outright in human life, whereby our comforts and luxury are purchased.

For us the sun has risen, and it is impossible to hide what is in full sight. It is impossible to strive for power, for the necessity of ruling over the people, for science, for art, supposed to be indispensable for the people, for the sacred rights of personal property, for the necessity of upholding tradition, and the like. The sun has risen, and all these transparent excuses hide nothing at all. All see and know, that a man who serves the government, does this, not for the good of the people who never asked him to, but simply because he needs the salary; and that men who are occupying themselves with the arts and sciences, are occupying themselves with them, not for the enlightenment of the people, but for the sake of the honorariums and the pensions; and men who keep the land away from the people and put a high price on it do this, not for the support of any sacred rights, but for the enhancement of the income needed by them for the gratification of their caprices. It is no longer possible to avoid this and lie.

Before the dominant, rich, idle classes are only two possible ways of escape: One is to turn aside, not only from Christianity in its true meaning, but also from anything that resembles it, to turn away from humanity, from justice, and say: I have control of these advantages and privileges, and I will cling to them whatever befalls. Whoever wishes to take them from me will have an account to settle with me. I have the power in my hands, — soldiers, gibbets, dungeons, knouts, and methods of capital punishment.

The other method is in recognizing one's injustice, in ceasing to lie, in repenting, and neither by words, nor by money extorted from the people under suffering and pain, coming to their help as has been done in the last few years, but in breaking down the artificial bar which stands between us and the laboring people; not by words, but in fact, recognizing them as our brethren;

and with this end in view changing our lives, renouncing those advantages and privileges which we have; and having renounced them, to stand on equal conditions with the people, and together with them to attain those blessings of government, science, civilization, which we now, from without and not asking their permission, pretend to wish to confer upon them.

We stand at the parting of the ways, and a choice is inevitable.

The first alternative means that we must devote ourselves to a perpetual lie, to a perpetual fear of what that lie may hide, and nevertheless the consciousness that surely sooner or later we shall be deprived of that position to which we so obstinately cling.

The second alternative means a voluntary recognition and carrying out into practice of what we ourselves preach, of what is demanded by our hearts and our minds, and what sooner or later, if not by us, then by others, will be fulfilled, because only by those who have power renouncing it is the only possible escape from those torments wherewith our pseudo-Christian humanity is suffering. The escape is only in the renunciation of a false, and the recognition of a genuine, Christianity.

IN THE MIDST OF THE STARVING

I

OUR activity since the time of the last report has been as follows: —

First, and foremost, our work has consisted in the establishment and carrying on of free eating-rooms.

The eating-rooms, which at the time of our last report numbered seventy-two, continued to multiply, and now, in four districts,[1] amount to one hundred and eighty-seven. This increase has proceeded, and still proceeds, in the following manner: from villages, contiguous to those in which we have established eating-rooms, either individual peasants or men selected with the starosta, come to us and petition us to open free dining-rooms for them.

One of us goes to that particular village from which the petitioners have come, and after making a tour of the homes, draws up a list of the property of the poor inhabitants. Sometimes, though very rarely, it seems that the village from which the deputies have come is not so very poor, and that there is no actual need of giving aid; but in the majority of cases the one of us who visits the village, finds as it always happens in a careful examination of peasant poverty that the situation of the poor families is so bad that help is indispensable, and this help has been given by means of establishing free eating-rooms, in which are admitted the weakest members of the poor families. In this way the number of free eating-rooms has increased and still continues to in-

[1] Yepifansky, Yefremovsky, Dankovsky, and Skopinsky Uyezdui.

crease in the direction where need is greatest and less provided against, but notably toward the Yefremovsky District and especially toward the Skopinsky District, where assistance is particularly lacking.

The eating-rooms were one hundred and eighty-seven in all, one hundred and thirty of which give the pensioners *privarok*, or stew and bread, and fifty-seven where they get only stew. This division into dining-rooms that give bread and dining-rooms that do not has been instituted since March, in consequence of the fact that since that month, in the Dankovsky District, in the poorest villages where our eating-rooms have been established, the zemstvos began to advance grain in the form of a loan at the rate of thirty pounds to each person, and in the Yepifansky District even more than thirty pounds, so that in these districts the poor population was almost or wholly supplied with grain and lacked only the privarok — potatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables which, even if some of the poor people had been having it, by March had entirely disappeared. For these poor people our "breadless eating-rooms" were opened, to which the pensioners come, bringing their own bread. Accustomed to receive bread also at the eating-rooms, the peasants were at first dissatisfied at this change, and declared that the advantage obtained from these dining-rooms did not compensate for their labor in carrying fuel from the forest to the dining-rooms, and that they did not want to use these dining-rooms. But this dissatisfaction did not last very long. Only the rich ones refused, and then very soon they also began to ask to be admitted to the tables.

The expense of the distribution of provisions for these "breadless" dining-rooms for ten persons a week was as follows: —

Rye meal, for kvas	5 lbs.
Wheat flour, for preparing porridge	2 "
Pea meal, oatmeal, or Indian meal, for kisel	10 "
Pease	10 "
Millet, for kasha gruel or kulesh	10 "
Potatoes	2 measures.
Beets	1 measure.

Sauerkraut	½ vedro.
Hempseed oil	½ lb.
Salt	4 lbs.
Onions	1 lb.

Moreover during the winter each eating-room consumed a pound[1] and a half of kerosene a week, and sixty puds of firewood a month.

With this distribution comes to every man two pounds of vegetables, that is potatoes, cabbage, and beets, and a half pound of flour food, that is to say, millet, pea, or rye meal, which gives when boiled more than four pounds a day for each person.

The eating-rooms are especially interesting, from the fact that they are an ocular proof of the mistaken notion obtaining among the majority of the peasants themselves that rye bread is the most nourishing, the wholesomest, and at the same time the cheapest food. These eating-rooms have shown beyond a peradventure that pease, millet, maize, potatoes, beets, cabbage, oat and barley kisel, constitute a more nourishing and a wholesomer and a cheaper food than bread. Persons who come to the "breadless" eating-rooms bring very small pieces of bread, and sometimes come without any bread at all, and they passed the winter satisfied and healthy, eating every day two kopeks' worth of broth and two or three kopeks' worth of bread, when, if they had fed on bread only, it would have cost them at least seven and a half kopeks' worth.

Here is the bill of fare for a week, compiled by one of our assistants: —

Monday — Shchi (cabbage soup), kasha-gruel.
Tuesday — Potato soup (*pakhliobka*), kisel of pease; for supper the same.
Wednesday — Pea soup, boiled potatoes; for supper, pease.
Thursday — Shchi, kisel of pease; for supper, the same with kvas.
Friday — Potato soup, kulesh of millet; for supper, the same.
Saturday — Shchi, boiled potatoes; for supper, potato with kvas.
Sunday — Pea soup, kasha; for supper, gorokh with kvas.

[1] A pound is one sixty-fourth of a chetverik, which is 5.77 gallons of tepid water; a vedro is 2.70 gallons.

The compiler of this bill of fare was guided by those products which were to be had at his disposal at any given time. With beets, out of which all winter long the svekolnik, so much liked by every one, can be prepared, and with oatmeal, the bill of fare may be more varied, without making the food any more expensive.

Our eating-rooms are now distributed in localities thus:[1] In all the eating-rooms of the four districts at the present time nine thousand ninety-three men are being fed. Such was one of our undertakings, and the principal one.

Another of our undertakings in the last winter months consisted in furnishing wood to the needy population. This need, with each winter month, became more and more noticeable, and by the middle of the winter especially, when provisions had already been more or less distributed, had become our chief lack. In the localities hereabouts, where there is no firewood or peat, and it was out of the question to think of straw for ovens, this scarcity after the middle of winter became very great. Very frequently it was possible to find, not only children, but even grown persons, not on the oven, but in the oven, that had been heated the evening before and still retained a little heat; and in many homes they had burnt up the woodwork, the barns, the sheds, even the hay, employing straw and wattles and rafters for fuel.

Owing to the generous contributions of wood which we received from various persons, we were enabled to distribute more than three hundred sazhens[2] of wood among the population, besides what is required for our eating-rooms. The method of distribution was this:—

To the more opulent peasants we sold the wood at our own price — reckoning the average price for wood bought in the forest or at Smolensk at five kopeks a pud; to the average peasant we let it go on shares at the station called "Klekotki," thirty versts away, so

[1] The list of eating-rooms according to districts, villages, as well as the contributors and the amounts contributed, were included in Count Tolstoï's original "Report for April 24, 1892," but are omitted in the reprint, and noted accordingly. — Ed.

[2] Seven hundred and four cords.

that one half they took for themselves, and the other half they delivered to us. To the poor peasants who had horses we gave wood gratuitously, but on condition that they should themselves get it to their homes from the station. For the poorest of all the peasants who had no horses we delivered the wood at their homes — the same wood which was brought by those who got it for us on shares.

Our third undertaking was the sustenance of the peasants' horses. Besides the eighty horses which in the early winter were sent to the government of Kaluga, twenty were taken to board by Prince D. D. O., ten by a merchant, Mr. S., and forty were put into Mr. E.'s yard, where they were fed on two carloads of hay contributed by P. A. Y. and on old straw given by the owner, and on some additional feed purchased.

Before spring, from the month of February on, two places were arranged for taking care of and feeding the peasants' horses: one at Mr. S.'s dvor, the other at Mr. M.'s in the Yefremovsky districts. For the feed of the horses ten thousand puds of straw, two carloads of chaff, were bought, three hundred puds of millet meal were laid in for scattering over it. By these means two hundred and seventy-six horses were kept during the course of the past two months.

Our fourth undertaking consisted in the gratuitous distribution of flax and linden-bark for working up, for those that need foot-gear and cloth. One carload of flax at six hundred and sixty rubles was distributed among the needy without payment being required, and another eighty puds and one hundred puds, contributed, was distributed on shares. The linen cloth which should come to our share has not hitherto been received; so that we have not as yet been able to supply the demand of Mrs. N. N. who sent us one hundred and twenty rubles for cloth, of that of Mrs. K. M. who also proposed to buy the peasants' cloth for furnishing remunerative work to peasant women.

Linden bark was contributed to us: one car-load by P. A. Y., one hundred puds by L., and one thousand

puds were bought for two hundred and nineteen rubles. A part of this linden bark was sold at a low price, a part was given gratuitously to the most needy, another part was distributed on shares for the pleating of lapti.

The lapti brought to us have been partly distributed, and are being distributed. This undertaking, the furnishing of material for remuneration later, was less successful than anything else. The business is so petty, so inconvenient to us, who stand toward the peasants in the relation of distributers of contributions standing in the position of employers demanded such a strict account of the use of the employment of the material, that this part of our work was a bad failure, eliciting only unwarranted expectations, envy, and unkind feelings. Much the better way would have been to do as we are now doing — selling these articles at very low prices to those that can buy them, and giving them gratuitously to those that cannot afford them — to the poor.

Our fifth undertaking, begun in February, consisted in establishing eating-rooms for very small children, those of a few months, nursing babies, and up to three years of age. We thus arranged these eating-rooms: —

Having inscribed all the homes where there are children of this age, and where there is no milk, we selected a matron who had a milch cow, and proposed to her in return for a compensation of fifteen puds of firewood, four puds of bran a month — equivalent to a wage of three rubles — to take her milk and make kasha gruel enough for ten children, out of millet for children from a year and a half to three years old, and of buckwheat for babies. For a child a year and a half to three years old, two pounds of millet is required a week, and for babies a pound of buckwheat.

In the large villages, these eating-rooms were thus arranged: milk is bought at the rate of forty kopeks a vedro; a pound of millet a week is allowed to each baby up to a year; two pounds to children from a year to two years old; a glass of milk a day is given to each very young child, two glasses to those older; those that have no cows receive milk and millet in the form

of kasha; those that have a cow receive the kasha, giving milk in exchange.

The mothers come sometimes alone after their gruel and carry it home; sometimes they bring their children and feed them there. Generally at the arrangement of these "asylums," the mothers, yes, and all the peasants, propose, instead of a free eating-room at one house, a personal distribution of millet and buckwheat, declaring that milk is always to be found at the houses of decent people. But we think that for the security of health for little children our arrangement is precisely the one that is requisite. Having received her five or ten pounds of millet and wheat, every peasant woman, however good a mother she might be, would look on this millet and wheat as on a store of provisions belonging to the whole household, and would use it as her whim or her appetite or the will of her husband might dictate; so that in many cases this millet and wheat would not get to the children at all. But if every day she receives a portion of milk kasha already prepared for her child, then she infallibly gives it to him and feeds him.

We have now established about eighty of these asylums, and new ones are being established every day. These asylums, which at first called forth considerable doubt, have now come into regular evidence, and almost every day women come with babies from villages in which there are none and beg us to establish them. These asylums cost about sixty kopeks a month for each child.

Thus it is entirely impossible in such a complicated and constantly varying enterprise as we are engaged in to tell once and for all how much money we shall need for carrying on till the new harvest all that we have undertaken to do; and, therefore, we do not begin a work which we cannot bring to a conclusion. Then, according to all probability, there will remain in our hands unexpended funds from the newly received contributions and from the money which we have lent and may be returned in the autumn. The very best disposition to make of these surplus funds, I think,

would be in the continuation of such asylums for little children for the coming year also. If, as I am persuaded, money is provided for this work and people, then why should they not became a perpetual institution? The establishment of such institutions everywhere might in a high degree diminish infant mortality. Such was our fifth enterprise.

Our sixth undertaking, which is now begun and which apparently will be carried through in one way or another, consists in distributing among needy peasants for sowing a sufficient quantity of oats, potatoes, hemp, and millet. This distribution of seed is especially needful in our locality because, over and above the sowing of the cornfield, there was an unexpected need of sowing over again a considerable portion — about one-third — of the rye, which failed in several places.

These seeds were distributed by us among the neediest of the peasants, among those whose land would remain infallibly unproductive if they did not receive the seed; yet we did not absolutely give them away, but only on the condition that they should return an equal quantity from the new crop, independently of the present price and that which should then be attached to such commodities. The money received for these commodities might be employed for the establishment of the infant asylums for the coming winter.

The purchase and distribution of horses constitutes our seventh form of activity. Besides the large percentage of those lacking horses, who always lack horses, reaching one-third in many villages, this year there are many peasants who have eaten up their horses, and who must now infallibly fall into absolute poverty, or practical servitude, unless they get horses. To such peasants we sell horses. Since spring we have bought sixteen such, and it is essential that we buy about one hundred more in the places where we have established our free tables. We sell these horses for about twenty-five rubles apiece on these conditions: the one receiving the horse enters into an obligation to cultivate two portions of land for the widows and orphans, or peasants who have no horses.

Our eighth undertaking was the sale of rye, meal, and baked bread at low prices. This enterprise — the sale of bread — continuing on a small scale through the winter, now with the approach of spring is enlarging. We have established and are establishing bakeshops for the sale of bread at a low price, at the rate of sixty kopeks a pud.

Besides these separate departments, for which we have used, and are still using, the contributions of money, small sums have been used by us in outright gifts to the needy for imperative necessities: funerals, the payment of debts, for the maintenance of minor schools, the purchase of books, building, and the like. Such expenses were very few, and may be seen from the financial report.

Such in general outlines were our undertakings during the course of six months. Our principal enterprise during this time was the feeding of the needy by means of free eating-rooms. In the course of the winter months this form of help, in spite of abuses, which were met with, in its principal purpose, that of insuring a perfectly poverty-stricken and enfeebled population — the children, the old people, the sick, and the convalescent — from starvation and poor food, was entirely successful.

But with the approach of spring considerations present themselves, demanding a change in the existing method of arranging and conducting the free eating-rooms.

With the approach of spring we are confronted in the first place with the new condition that many who now come to the eating-rooms will be at work or off after horses, and it will be impossible for them to be present at dinner or supper time; in the second place, that in summer, owing to the increased heat in the dining-rooms, fires will be likely to break out. If as a consequence of this our activity changes, we will report upon it if it is possible.

Together with this we present a brief report of the contributions received by us and the use we made of them. A detailed report we will furnish if we have time, and have printed afterward.

II

REPORT ON THE USES MADE OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MONEY FOR THE STARVING[1]

Our work during the course of the summer has consisted in the following: —

I. In maintaining the former eating-rooms and establishing new ones;

II. In arranging for the asylums for babies and little children;

III. In distributing seed for the spring sowing;

IV. In the purchase of horses; and,

V. In the establishment of bakeshops and the sale of bread.

Our first enterprise, the free eating-rooms, continued from April 24th till the third of August in almost the same form as in the preceding months, with only this difference, that, fearing the risk of fires from hot ovens, we gave up the baking of bread in the dining-rooms. Wherever we could do so, we furnished baker's bread; and where it was impossible to prepare a sufficient quantity of bread, we distributed meal in rations. In many villages some of our coadjutors proposed to give out rations also of privarok.[2]

This change was at first welcomed with delight, but very speedily in the most of the villages the peasants themselves desired to return to the old way.

The need of free dining-rooms was felt in summer in the long days and the hard work more than in winter. Very often in many villages the women begged that in place of the dinner, to which they had a right, in the evening they might bring their husbands and their fathers who came late from their work.

The number of free eating-rooms at this time notably increased.

The whole number of eating-rooms was two hundred

[1] Between April 24 and August 3, 1892.

[2] *Privarok* is boiled beef and broth.

and forty-six, and there were simultaneously fed in them from ten to thirteen thousand persons more or less.

Our second enterprise — the arrangement of *priyutui*, or asylums, for by this incorrect term we called the kitchens for the preparation of milk porridge for babies — continued on the former basis and was widely developed. For some of the asylums, in villages where there were few cows — and in our circuit there were villages where sixty out of a hundred homes had no cows at all, — we purchased cows on the stipulation that those that received them should furnish milk for the children assigned to them. For some, where this was possible, we bought milk.

In one hundred and twenty-four of these asylums between two and three thousand were fed.

Our third enterprise, consisting in the distribution of seeds, — oats, potatoes, millet, hemp, — we arranged as follows: —

Arriving at a village from which petitioners had come, we would invite three or four well-to-do householders who needed no assistance, and assign to them the duty of making a list of such persons as needed seed; and according to the representations of these inspectors we indicated the quantity necessary for each petitioner. Sometimes we made it more, sometimes less; sometimes we erased some names and substituted others not included on the lists.

Our fourth occupation — the distribution of horses to those who were carrying on farming, but had either eaten up their horse or had met with some unfortunate accident — was made especially difficult by the fact that the help given to any one person was disproportionately large, and therefore elicited envy, reproaches, and dissatisfaction among those whom we had to refuse. We determined this assistance just as in the case of the seeds, by the reports of the referees of the village from which the petitioners came.

In these two activities we saw with especial clearness the sharp distinction between the charity which has for its purpose the feeding of the hungry and attained by

the free eating-rooms, and the charity having for its purpose the giving of assistance to the peasant husbandry in which we were involved in distributing oats, millet, hemp, potatoes, and horses.

Having taken as our object the relieving of the inhabitants of a certain locality from the danger of pining away, of becoming sickly, and perishing from lack of food, we would first establish free eating-rooms in this locality, and thus completely attain our end. Even if there were occasionally abuses — that is, if there were people able to subsist at their own homes, who yet got food at the eating-rooms — these abuses were of small importance where the cost of food amounted to no more than from two to five kopeks a day.

But, having taken as our object to help the peasant husbandry, we were immediately confronted, in the first place, with the insurmountable difficulty of determining whom to help, how to help, and in what way; in the second place, with the magnitude of the need to cover, which would require a hundred times more means than we had at our disposal; and in the third place, with the possibility of the greatest abuses, such as always accompany a gratuitous, or even a loan, distribution.

Neither of these undertakings, notwithstanding the great efforts which we made to carry them out, confirmed in our minds the consciousness that by so doing we had conferred any real benefit on the peasants of our locality.

Our fifth activity was the baking of bread and selling it at a low price. At first we sold it at eighty kopeks, then at sixty kopeks, a pud, and this has continued to be the price till now.

This enterprise went, and is still going, very well. The people very gladly prize the opportunity of always having cheap bread at hand. Often, especially in summer, people came for it ten versts or more, and if they were not in time for the first baking, which would be already disposed of, they would have their names entered, as at the box office of the theaters, for ten pounds of the next baking, and they would wait till noon for their share.

By the end of July we planned to discontinue the free tables, keeping on only with the bakeries and the children's asylums, which were still needed, and on which we still spent the money remaining at our disposal. But we did not succeed in discontinuing the free tables, because in consequence of the cessation of the activities of the "Red Cross," it was essential to arrange immediately to establish eating-rooms for all those who had been under the care of the "Red Cross," and who had been since the first of August without oversight. From the first of August we established seventy eating-rooms, for the most needy of the "Red Crossites," who were very speedily joined by the poorest of the territorial peasants. Their number has been constantly increasing.

The harvest this year in the region of our activity has been like this: in a circle with a diameter of about fifty versts, in the center of which we are established, the harvest of rye is worse than a failure. In many villages along the Dona, — Nikitskoye, Myasnovka, Pashkovo, — where I was early in September, there was no rye at all. What there was had been sowed and eaten up. Oats had not grown at all; rarely had any one enough for seed. There were fields of oats which had not been mowed. Potatoes and millet were good, but not everywhere. Moreover, not all sowed millet.

To the question as to the economical situation of the people this year, I could not answer accurately. I could not answer it because, in the first place, all of us who were busied last year in helping to feed the people had got into the condition of a doctor who, having been summoned to a man with a dislocated leg, should see that the man was thoroughly diseased. What answer would the doctor give, if he were asked as to the patient's condition? "What do you want to know about?" the doctor will ask, in return. "Do you inquire about his leg, or his general condition? The leg is of no consequence, it is merely dislocated, — it is an accident, — but his general condition is bad."

But, moreover, I could not answer the question as to the situation of the people, "whether it is serious, very

serious, or not serious?" because all of us who live near to the people are too much accustomed to their continually and gradually deteriorating condition.

If any inhabitant of a city should come, in bitter cold weather, to an izba which had been slightly warmed the evening before, and should see the occupants of the izba crawling down, not from the top of the stove, but from the oven itself, in which they will take turns in spending the day, that being their only means of getting warm, or burning the roofs of their homes and hay for fuel, living on nothing but bread made of equal parts of meal and the worst kind of bran, and grown men quarreling and fighting because the slice cut off the loaf did not reach the designated weight by an eighth of a pound, or men unable to leave the izba because they had nothing to wear or nothing to put on their feet, then he would be struck by what he saw. We have got so accustomed to such things that they do not impress us. And so the question, in what condition the people of our locality are, would be answered better by a person who should come here for the first time than by us. We have grown hardened, and no longer see anything.

Some idea of the situation of the people in our locality may be gathered from the following statistical data, extracted from the *Tula Gazette*.[1]

In the four districts, Bogoroditsky, Yepifansky, Yefremovsky, Novosil'sky, during the four fruitful years from 1886 to 1890, on the average, in the five months from February to June inclusive, there were 9.761 deaths and 12.069 births. During the famine year, 1892, in these same districts during the same five months, there were 14.309 deaths and 11.383 births. In ordinary years the birth rate exceeds the death rate, on the average, by 2.308; in this unfruitful year the death rate exceeds the birth rate by 2.926. So that, in consequence of the failure of the crops in these four districts, the diminution of the population, as opposed to ordinary years, was 5.234. In comparison with other districts in

[1] *Tul'skiya Gubernskiya Vyedomosti.*

fruitful years, the following results are obtained: In the four fertile districts, Tul'sky, Kashirsky, Odoyevsky, Byelevsky, in 1892, in the course of the same five months, there were 8.268 births and 6.468 deaths. In these districts, when the harvest failed, there were 11.383 births and 14.309 deaths, so that in those districts that fruitful year the birth rate, compared to the death rate, was approximately as four to three, while in those districts when there was loss of the crop, the death rate was to the birth rate as seven to five; in other words, when the districts had good harvests to every four births there were three deaths, when the crops failed there were, to every seven deaths, only five births.

In the percentage of these relations the condition of the localities under the failure of the crops is shown with especial distinctness by the death rate in the month of June. In the Yepifansky District sixty per cent more died in 1892; in the Bogoroditsky District one hundred and twelve per cent, and in the Yefremovsky district one hundred and sixteen per cent more than in ordinary years.

Such were the consequences of the failure of the crops last year, notwithstanding the increased assistance rendered by government, by the "Red Cross," and by private charity. What will happen this year in our region, where rye has turned out worse than last year, oats have entirely failed, fuel is lacking, and the last energies of the population were exhausted a year ago?

How is it? Must they starve again? Starve? Free tables! free tables! Starve! This is an old story, and so terribly wearisome. It is a bore to you in Moscow and Petersburg, but here, — when from morning till evening they stand under your windows or at your door and you cannot go along the street without hearing always the same sentence: "We have not tasted food for two days; we have eaten our last oats; what shall we do? the last end has come; must we die?" and so on, — here, however shameful it is to acknowledge it, it has already become so irksome that you begin to look on them as your enemies!

I get up very early; 'tis a clear, frosty morning with

a beautiful sunrise; the snow creaks under my feet; I go outdoors, hoping that no one is as yet out, so that I may have time to take a turn. But no; as soon as I have opened the door, already there are two there: one a tall, broad-shouldered muzhik in a short, ragged sheepskin jacket, in broken linden-bark shoes, with an emaciated face, with a bag over his shoulder, — they all have emaciated faces, so that these faces have become typical of the muzhik. And with him is a lad of fourteen without any shuba, in a ragged little jacket, also wearing linden shoes and also carrying a bag and a stick.

I try to go past them; the low bows begin and the usual colloquy. There is nothing for it. I have to return indoors. They follow me.

"What do you want?"

"Have pity on us!"

"What?"

"Have pity on us!"

"What do you need?"

"We come for help."

"What kind of help?"

"To save our lives."

"But what do you need?"

"We are starving to death. Help us a little!"

"Where are you from?"

"From Zatvornoye."

I know that is a miserable rundown community, where we have not, as yet, opened a free eating-room. Beggars come from there in dozens, and I immediately reckon this man as one of these professional beggars, and I feel indignant at him, and indignant because they bring their children with them and spoil them.

"What do you ask for?"

"Give us your advice!"

"But how can I give you my advice? We here can't do anything. We have nothing here to eat."

But he pays no attention to me; and once more begin the same old stories heard a hundred times, and seeming to me to be made up out of whole cloth: —

"Nothing grew; eight in the family; I am the only worker; the old woman has died; last summer we had to eat the cow, at Christmas the last horse died; wherever I go there is nothing, the children are crying for hunger; there is nowhere to turn to; we have not anything to eat for three days."

This is the usual story. I wait, wondering if he will soon end it. But he keeps speaking.

"I thought I could live somehow; but I have struggled till I have no strength left. I never expected to have to beg, but God has brought me to it!"

"Very good, very good; we will come; then we will see what can be done," I say, and I wish to go, and my eyes suddenly rest on the boy. The boy is looking at me piteously with his beautiful brown eyes full of tears and hope, and one bright tear-drop already hangs on his nose, and at the same instant falls off and drops on the wooden floor covered with trampled snow. And his pretty, agonized face, with ruddy hair blown by the breeze around his head, is all convulsed with restrained sobs. For me, the father's words are the old well-worn yarn. But to him that repetition of the horrible time which he and his father had experienced together, and the repetition of it all in the triumphant moment when they had at last reached me, reached help, affected his nerves so shaken by famine. To me all this was only a bore, a bore; all I can think of is how soon they would squander what I should give.

To me it is an old story, but to him it is frightfully new.

Yes, to us it is a bore. But still, they have such a longing to eat, such a longing to live, such a longing for happiness, for love, as I could see by his charming tear-brimming eyes fastened on me, that he had — this good, pitiful lad, tormented by poverty and full of an innocent pity for himself!

Byegitchevka, September 23, 1892.

FAMINE OR NOT FAMINE

THIS winter I received a letter from Mrs. Sokolof with an account of the needs of the peasants in the Voronezh Government, and I transmitted this letter, together with a memorandum of my own, to the *Russkiya Vyedomosti*,[1] and since then several persons have sent

[1] The memorandum addressed to the editor of the *Russian Gazette* was as follows: —

DEAR SIR, — I opine that the publication of the enclosed private letter from a person who evidently knows the peasantry very intimately, and accurately describes their situation on the spot, may be useful. The situation of the peasants in the places described is not exceptional; as I well know it is the same with the peasants in many places in the Kozlovsky, Yeletsky, Novosil'sky, Chernsky, Yefremovsky, Zemlyansky, Nizhnedyevitsky districts, and many others in the zone of the "black earth" — the chernozyom. The person who wrote the letter had no notion of its being published, and only consented to it at the solicitation of her friends.

It is true that the situation of the larger part of our peasantry is such that it is sometimes very difficult to draw the line between what may be called famine and their normal condition, and that the aid especially needed this year is of the same kind that was needed last year and every year, though in a less degree; it is true that charitable aid for the population is a very difficult question, since it often stimulates a desire to take advantage of it even in those that might exist without such aid; it is true that what can be done by private persons is only a drop in the ocean of the peasants' need; it is true, also, that aid in the form of dining-rooms, selling grain at reduced prices or distributing it, furnishing fodder for cattle, and the like, is only a palliative and does not overcome the fundamental causes of the catastrophe. All this is true, but it is also true that aid extended temporarily may save the life of an old man, or a child, may convert a ruined man's despair or animosity into a feeling of trust in the goodness and brotherly love of his fellow-men. And what is more important than all, it is unquestionably true that if every man of our circle who, instead of thinking of his amusements, theaters, concerts, subscription dinners, races, exhibitions, and the like, would think of that extreme poverty (as compared with anything to be seen in the city) in which now, at this particular minute, many and many of our brethren are living, and if every such man would strive, even though ignorantly, by sacrificing the smallest part of his pleasure, to help this dire need, he would unquestionably help himself in the most important thing in the world — in a reasonable under-

me their contributions to aid the starving peasants. These small contributions I have forwarded partly to a good acquaintance of mine in the Zemlyansky District, two hundred rubles; the monthly contribution of Smolensk physicians and certain other small offerings I despatched to the Chernsky District in the government of Tula, to my son and his wife, for the distribution of help in their locality. But in April I received new and quite important contributions: Mrs. Mevius sent four hundred rubles; three hundred came in small sums; S. T. Morozof gave one thousand rubles; so that about two thousand were collected, and considering that I had no right to refuse to serve as medium between the contributor and the needy, I decided to go to the locality so as to distribute this aid in the very best way. As in 1891 I came to the conclusion that *the very best form of helping* was by *eating-rooms*,[1] because only by the organization of eating-rooms could be assured good every-day food for old men, old women, the sick, and the children of the poor, and this, I consider, met the desires of the contributors.

In distributing provisions by hand this end was not attained, because every good manager on receiving meal, always first of all gave some to his horse with which he had to plow, and in doing so, he does what is perfectly reasonable, because he must plow so as to support his family, not only this year, but the next; the feeble members of his family will not have enough to eat this year any more than before the distribution, so that the object of the contributors will not be attained.

Moreover, only in the form of eating-rooms for the feeble members of families is there any limit on which

standing of the meaning of life, and by the fulfilling in it of his human destination.

Mrs. Sokolof's letter gives a vivid account of the pitiful destitution of the peasantry caused by the failure of their crops and their inability to earn anything to pay for rent, for saving their cattle, for seed, or even for food and clothing. — Ed.

[1] The word *stolovaya*, plural *stolovuiya*, from *stol*, a table, uniformly used in the original, is here translated eating-room, free eating-room, free tables. — Tr.

to take a stand. By distribution by hand, the aid goes to the farm,[1] and in order to satisfy the demands of a ruined peasant farm, it is impossible to decide what is most necessary and what is not. Most necessary is a horse, is a cow, is the redemption of a pawned shuba, and payment of taxes, and seed, and repairs. Thus in the distribution of help one has to give it arbitrarily at haphazard, or else to all equally without distinction. Therefore I decided to distribute the help, as I had done in 1891, 1892, in the form of rations.

In order to determine the neediest families and the number of persons in each of them deserving to be admitted to the public tables, I was guided as before by the following considerations: —

1. The amount of cattle;
2. The number of parcels of land;
3. The number of members of each family capable of working for wages;
4. The number of consumers; and
5. Exceptionally unfortunate circumstances reducing any family, — a fire, illness of members, the death of a horse, and the like.

The first village to which I came was Spasskoye, well known to me as having once belonged to Ivan Sergeyevitch Turgenief. Having inquired of the starosta and the other old men of the village as to the condition of the peasants in that vicinity, I became convinced that it was far from being as bad as had been the condition of the peasants among whom we had organized public tables in 1891. At all the farms there were horses, cows, sheep, potatoes, and there were no ruined houses. So that, judging by the condition of the Spasskoye peasants, I thought that probably the reports of the year's poverty were exaggerated.

But my visit to Malaya Gubarevka and other villages to which I was directed as being very poor, convinced me that Spasskoye was in exceptionally fortunate circumstances, both on account of having good

[1] *Khozyaïstvo*, housekeeping, farming, anything connected with domestic economy.

land and on account of having enjoyed a good harvest the year before. Thus in the first village which I went to from Spasskoye, Malaya Gubarevka, on ten farms there were four cows and two horses, two families were begging, and the poverty of all the inhabitants was terrible. Such also was the condition of many villages,[1] though some were rather better off than others. In all these fourteen or fifteen villages, though there was no adulteration of the bread as was the case in 1891, still the bread, while pure, was not to be had as desired. Broths — of millet, cabbage, potatoes — were entirely lacking to the majority. The food consisted of herb shchi made of grass, colored with milk where there was a cow, but not where there was no cow, and nothing but bread. In all these villages the majority of the inhabitants had sold or hypothecated everything that could be sold or hypothecated. So that there was so much of extreme poverty in the places around us in a radius of seven or eight versts that, after we had established fourteen public tables, we received each day petitions for help from new villages in the same situation. Where the eating-rooms were established they went very well and cost about one ruble fifty kopeks a month for each person and apparently met the requirements which we set for ourselves, — keeping up the life and health of the feeble members of the poorest families.

In the afternoon of June 6, I reached the village of Gushchino, which consists of forty-nine homes, twenty-four of which lacked horses. It was dinner-time: outdoors under two well-cleaned sheds at five tables sat eighty pensioners; the old men mixed with the old women on stools at large tables, at small tables the children on deal boards laid across blocks. They had just finished the first course, potatoes with kvas; and the second, cabbage soup, was coming on. The peasant women were pouring the smoking, well-prepared shchi into wooden bowls; a waiter with a loaf of bread

[1] Bolshaya Gubarevka, Matsnevo, Protosovo, Chapkino, Kukuyevka, Gushchino, Khmyelinok, Shelamkovo, Lopashino, Siderovo, Mikhaïlovo Brod, Bobriko, and the two Ramenkos.

and a knife went around the table, and holding the loaf against his chest, cut off slices of nice-looking, fresh, savory bread to any one who had eaten his.[1] The grown-up people were served by the matron[2] and a woman from among the pensioners, the children by a young girl, the matron's daughter. Everything went off in an orderly, dignified manner, exactly as if this condition of things had existed for centuries.

The pensioners were for the most part wrinkled old women and emaciated, feeble old men with thin beards, gray hair, or bald heads, and wearing tattered clothing. On all their faces there was an expression of tranquillity and satisfaction. All these people evidently found themselves in that peaceful and joyous and even somewhat enthusiastic frame of mind induced by the supply of sufficient food after long deprivation of it. You could hear the sounds of eating, of subdued conversation, and occasionally a laugh at the children's tables. Two tramps were present, and the manager apologized for admitting them to the dinner.

From Gushchino I proceeded to the hamlet of Gnyevuishevo, from which two days before some peasants had come asking for aid.

This hamlet, like Gubarevka, consists of ten homes, and for these ten homes there were four horses and four cows and almost no sheep. All the houses were so old and wretched that they barely stood. All the people were poor and begged us for help.

"Though the very little children have gone to sleep," said a peasant woman, "yet they begged for papki (bread), and as there was none to give them, they went to bed without any supper."

I know that here there is a bit of exaggeration, but what a muzhik in a kaftan with the shoulder torn said was surely no exaggeration, but the sober truth:

[1] We succeeded in securing on the South Eastern R. R., two carloads of flour at seventy-six kopeks when its price was ninety, and this flour proved to be so unusually good that both the women who made the loaves and those who were at the tables were enthusiastic over it, declaring that the bread made from it was like gingerbread. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

[2] *Khozyaïka.*

"There might be enough bread for two or three children," said he, "but here I carried to the city my last outside garment — my shuba has been there for a long time — and brought back only three pudiks for eight persons. How long would that last? And now I don't know what next I can pawn!"

I asked for change for three rubles. In the whole hamlet there was not a ruble of money.

Evidently it was necessary to establish a free table there. And it was equally necessary to do the same in other hamlets from which came petitions.

Moreover, we were informed that in the southern part of the Chernsky District, on the borders of the Yefremovsky, the need was very great, and that so far no help had been afforded. It would seem evident that we must go and widen our operations, and this was rendered possible by the receipt of quite considerable donations: five hundred rubles from the Princess Kudashef, a thousand rubles from Mrs. Mansurof, two thousand rubles from theatrical managers.

But it proved that it was almost impossible to continue the work, much less to widen its scope. It was impossible to continue it for the following reasons: The governor of Orlof would not permit the free eating-rooms to be opened, first, without the consent of the local wardenship; secondly, without the decision of the question as to the establishment of every eating-room by the zemsky nachalnik; and thirdly, without sometime previously notifying the governor as to the number of eating-rooms which would have to be opened in any given place.

In the government of Tula the stanovoï had already appeared with an order prohibiting the establishment of eating-rooms without the governor's consent; without the coöperation of helpers specially occupied in the rather complicated and laborious business of the free tables their establishment is impossible.

Thus, notwithstanding the unquestionable need of the people, notwithstanding the means contributed by the philanthropic for the relief of this need, our work not

only could not be enlarged, but was in danger of being entirely stopped. As a result of this the money recently received by me, and especially the thirty-five hundred rubles above mentioned, and certain other small contributions remained unexpended, and will have to be returned to the donors, unless they wish to make some other disposition of them.

On the third day of June the account of receipts and disbursements was as follows: —

Receipts.

	Rubles.	Kopeks.
From the physicians of Smolensk	323	27
" Mr. Mevius	400	..
" Prince T.	100	..
" A. Z.	200	..
" Baumann	25	..
" M. K.	40	..
" C.	25	..
Through "R. V."	112	48
From "A woman" through D.	16	..
" Kasatkin	25	..
Through "R. V."	200	..
From Baumann	20	..
" "A woman"	250	..
" gymnasium pupils	18	..
By the sale of a medal from C. N. Shil	99	..
From Olimpiada Kolalevskaya	4	..
" S. T. M.	1000	..
" E. F. Younge	15	..
	3012	75

Disbursements.

	Rubles.	Kopeks.
Flour (2584 puds)	2061	18
Millet (150 puds)	140	..
Pease (75 puds)	60	..
Potatoes (131 chetverts)	171	24
Cabbage (56 puds, 35 lb.)	27	50
Transport of millet, butter, salt	3	10
Firewood	56	75
Butter (5 puds)	27	80
Salt (10 puds)	2	40
	2549	97

Such has been my personal work. Now I will try to answer those general questions to which my activity has led me — questions which, if one judges by the newspapers, have occupied society also of late. These questions are as follows: —

Is there famine this year or is there not famine?

Why is there so often such widespread need among the people?

And what is to be done to prevent this need from recurring, and would not especial measures be demanded for overcoming it?

To the first question the answer is this: —

There are statistical reports to prove that the Russian nation in general are not eating within thirty per cent of what a man needs for his normal support. Moreover, there is information to the effect that the young men of the black earth zone during the last twenty years have been growing less and less able to fulfil the requirements of a good physique for military service; the general census has shown that the increase of the population, twenty years ago the largest in the agricultural region, has been constantly diminishing, and of late has come to zero in these governments.

But even without studying statistical data, it requires only to compare the average peasant farmer of the central regions — skeleton-like in his emaciation and with his unhealthy complexion — with the same peasant who has secured a situation as a dvornik or a coachman where he has a good table, and to compare the motions of this dvornik or coachman, and the work which he can do, with the motions and work of the peasant, living at home, to see how much the peasant has become enfeebled.

When, as used to be the case with extravagant managers and is still the case, cattle are kept for manure, feeding them somewhere in the cold yard simply that they may not perish, it results that from all this cattle, only those which are in full strength endure without loss to their organism, while the old and the feeble, the young ones that have not yet attained strength, either

perish, or if they survive, it is at a loss of their increase and their strength, and in the case of the young at a loss of size and development and in exactly the same condition are the Russian peasantry of the black earth center.

So that if by the word "*golod*" — hunger — is meant that insufficiency of food in consequence of which men are subject to disease and death, as was the case recently in India according to reports, then such a famine did not exist in Russia in 1891 nor does it to-day.

But if by the word "golod" is meant insufficiency of food, — not the kind that people actually die of, but the kind where people live, but live miserably, dying prematurely, growing disfigured, not begetting children, and degenerating, — then, indeed such a famine has existed for the past twenty years for the largest part of the black earth center, and is this year particularly violent.

Such is my answer to the first question. To the second question, What is the cause of this? my answer is that it is mental and not material.

Military men know the meaning of the term "the spirit of the army," know that this intangible element is the first and foremost condition of success, that if this element is absent, all others are unavailing. Let soldiers be handsomely dressed, well fed and armed, let them have the most advantageous position, the battle will be lost if this intangible element called "the army spirit" is lacking.

It is the same thing in the battle with nature. As soon as a people lack vigor, faith, hope in an ever increasing amelioration of their circumstances, but on the contrary become conscious of the idleness of their endeavors, of dejection, that people will not conquer nature, but will be conquered by it. And such in our day has come to be the condition of our peasantry, and especially that of the agricultural center. They feel that their position as agriculturists is miserable, almost inextricable, and having become wonted to this inextricable situation, they no longer struggle with it, but merely exist and accomplish only as much as the instinct of self-preserva-

tion leads them to do. Moreover, the wretchedness of the condition into which they have fallen still further enhances the depression of their spirits.

The lower the economical prosperity of the population sinks, like a weight on a lever, the harder it is for them to rise, and the peasants, conscious of this, give up all effort.

The symptoms of this depression of spirit are very many. The one first and foremost is their complete indifference to all spiritual interests. The religious question is absolutely lacking in the agricultural center, and not in the least because the peasant holds firmly to orthodoxy, — on the contrary, all the reports and advices of the priests confirm the fact that the people are growing more and more indifferent to the Church, — but because he feels no interest in spiritual questions.

A second symptom is their inertia, their unwillingness to change their habits and their position. For all these years at a time when in the other governments of Russia European plows, iron harrows, new methods of sowing seeds, improved horticulture, and even mineral manures were coming into use, in the center everything remained the same — the wooden sokha, and all the habits and customs of Rurik's time. Even the emigration is less from the black earth district.

A third symptom is their aversion to rustic industry, not through laziness, but the languid, dejected, unproductive labor; labor, the emblem of which might be represented by the well from which the bucket is drawn, not by a sweep, nor by a wheel, as used to be done, but by the rope alone and by the hands, and with a leaky bucket, so that a third of the water is lost before it reaches the top. Such is almost all the labor of the black earth muzhik, who labors sixteen hours in plowing a field with a horse scarcely able to drag one leg after another, while with a good horse, well fed, and a good iron plow he might accomplish it in half a day. Together with this is the natural desire to forget his troubles, and then wine and tobacco are more and

more extensively used, so that lately even young boys drink and smoke.

A fourth symptom of dejection of spirits is the undutifulness of sons to their parents, of younger brothers to their elders, the retention of money earned away from home, and the endeavor of the younger generation to avoid the heavy, hopeless rustic life, and to get situations in the city. A striking symptom of this degeneracy during the last seven years was the fact that in many hamlets mature and, it would seem, well-to-do peasants would come begging to the free eating-rooms, and enter them if they were permitted.

This was not so in 1891. Here, for example, is an incident which shows the whole degree of the poverty and distrust of their own resources to which the peasants have come.

In the village of Shushmino, Chernsky District, a lady owning an estate sold the peasants some land through the bank. She asked of them a money payment at the rate of ten rubles a desyatin, and even then gave them two terms of payment at the rate of five rubles each, letting them have the land with the seed in at the rate of two chetverts of oats on the spring yield. And in spite of these remarkably advantageous conditions, the peasants hesitated and would not undertake it.

So that my answer to the second question is that the cause of the situation to which the peasants are reduced is that they have lost their energy and confidence in their own forces, and hope for the amelioration of their circumstances; they have lost spirit.

The answer to the third question, — how to help the peasants in their wretched condition? — is an outcome of this second answer. In order to help the peasantry one thing is necessary — to raise their spirits, to overcome what is crushing them.

The spirits of the peasantry are crushed by the lack of recognition on the part of those that govern them of their human dignity, considering the peasant, not a man like others, but a coarse, unreasonable creature which

ought to be guarded and directed in every action, and consequently utter constraint and extinction of his personality. Thus in religion, the most important of all things, every peasant feels that he is not a free member of his Church, having freely chosen, or, at least, having freely acknowledged the faith that has been preached to him, but a slave to that Church, obliged absolutely to fulfil the duties laid upon him by his religious superiors, who are sent to him and appointed independently of his will or choice. That this is an important cause for the dejected condition of the people is proved by the fact that always, everywhere, as soon as peasants are emancipated from ecclesiastical tyranny, falling away, as happens, into a sect, immediately the spirits of this population rise and immediately, without exception, their economical prosperity is established.[1] Ruinous for the people is this anxiety about them, displayed in the special laws for the peasantry, leading in reality to the absence of all laws, and to the full discretion of functionaries placed in control of the peasants.

For the peasants there exist nominally certain special laws both for the control of the land and their allotments and for their obligations — they have no rights; and in reality there is an inconceivable mass of decrees, explanations, of common law, of cassation decisions, and the like, in consequence of which the peasants, with perfect justification, feel that they are absolutely dependent on the whim of their numberless chiefs.

The peasant recognizes as his chief, not only the sotsky, the starosta, the starshina, the secretary, the uryadnik, the stanovoï, the ispravnik, the insurance agent, the surveyor, the arbitrator of disputes, the veterinary and his assistant, the doctor, the priest, the judge, the magistrate, and every functionary and even landowner, but also every gentleman, because he knows by experience that every such gentleman can do with him what he pleases.

More than by anything else is the peasant's spirit crushed — although this is not visible — by the shame-

[1] This passage is not found in the Moscow edition. — ED.

ful torture of flogging, which, like the sword of Damocles, hangs over every peasant.

Thus to my three questions propounded at the beginning — is there famine or is there not famine? what is the cause of the people's poverty? and what must be done to help this poverty? — my answers are as follows: —

There is no famine, but in the whole population there is chronic lack of food, and this has lasted already twenty years, and is all the time increasing, and is especially felt this year owing to the poor harvest of a year ago, and will be still worse the year to come because the rye harvest this year is poorer than it was a year ago. There is no famine, but the situation is far worse. It is just the same as would be the case of a physician who was asked if a patient had typhus, and replied no, not typhus, but galloping consumption.

To the second question my answer is, that the cause of the poverty of the people is not material, but is spiritual, that the chief cause is the loss of their spirits, that until the people shall recover their spirits there will be no help by external means — coming from the ministry of agriculture,[1] or exhibitions, or agricultural colleges, or changes of tariff, or deliverance from redemption payments (which should have been done long ago, since the peasants long ago paid up their obligations if the rate per cent now employed is taken into consideration), or the withdrawal of duties from iron and machinery[2] — nothing will help the people if their mental state remains the same. I do not say that these measures are not all advantageous, but that they will be advantageous only when the people are cheered in spirit and consciously and freely desire to take advantage of them.

The answer to my third question — what to do that this poverty may not be repeated — is that it is necessary, I will not say to esteem the people, but to cease to scorn and insult them by treating them as if they

[1] "And all his fictions." Geneva edition.

[2] The Geneva edition adds: "And the establishments for the undoubted healing of all diseases, and parochial schools, not too much loved by them now."

were animals; it is necessary to subject them to general, not to exclusive laws; it is necessary to give them freedom of education,[1] freedom of religion,[2] freedom of movement, and above all to remove the brand of ignominy which lies on the past and present reigns, the practice[3] of barbarous torture — the castigation of grown men simply because they happen to be in the class of peasants.

If it is said to me: "Here you wish the people well — choose one of two things: to give the whole ruined population three horses, two cows, and three well manured desyatins, and a stone house for each family, or only freedom of worship, of instruction, of migration, and the abrogation of all special laws for the peasants," then I should without hesitation choose the second, because I am persuaded that with whatever material blessings the peasant is loaded, if they remain with the same clergy, the same parochial schools, the same crown liquor saloons, the same army of functionaries pretending to be working for their advantage, then within twenty years they would have spent everything, and would be left the same poor wretches which they were.[4]

If the peasants should be freed from all these dealings and humiliations by which they are bound, then within twenty years they would acquire all the riches with which we should wish to reward them, and far more besides.

I think this will be so in the first place, because I have always found more reason and actual knowledge, such as is needful to people, among the peasants than among the functionaries, and because I think that the peasants themselves devise better and more quickly what is needful for them; in the second place because it is more reasonable to suppose that the peasants — the very persons whose welfare is in question — know better in what it consists than the functionaries, who are engaged chiefly in getting their salaries; and in the third place, because the experience of life constantly and unmistakably

[1] Not in Geneva edition. [2] Not in Moscow edition.
[3] The twelve words preceding are not in the Moscow edition.
[4] This paragraph is not found in the Moscow edition. — Ed.

shows that the more the peasants are subjected to the influence of the chinovniks, as is the case in the centers, the poorer they grow, and on the other hand,[1] the farther peasants live from the functionaries, as for example, in the governments of Samara, Orenburg, Viatka, Vologda, Olenezh, and Siberia, the more prosperous they are, without exception.

Here are the thoughts and feelings which were aroused in me by a new and close observation of the peasants' poverty, and I consider it my duty to express them, so that true men, actually desirous of compensating the people for all that we have received and are receiving from them, might not spend our energies in vain in a second-rate and often false activity, and that all our energies might be expended on that without which no help is efficacious — the destruction of all that depresses the spirit of the people, and the restoration of all that may raise it.

June 7, 1898.

Before despatching this article I resolved to go once more to the Yefremovsky District, the wretched condition of a part of which I had learned from persons worthy of the fullest confidence. On my way to this locality it was my fortune to traverse the Chernsky District from one end to the other. The rye in that region where I lived, that is, in the northern part of the Chernsky and Mtsensky districts, this year was thoroughly bad, worse than in the past, but what I saw on the way to the Yefremovsky District was perfectly unexpected.[2]

The region which I traversed — about thirty-five versts in a straight line, from the village of Gremyachevo to the boundary of the Yefremovsky and Bogoroditsky districts, and, as I was told, twenty versts in width — was looking forward to awful poverty for the year before them. The rye over the whole space of this quadrilateral — almost one hundred thousand desyatins[3] — had

[1] The fifty words preceding are not in the Moscow edition.
[2] "Surpassed my gloomiest forebodings." Geneva edition.
[3] This sentence not so definite in Moscow edition.

been an absolute failure. If you go one verst, two, ten, twenty versts, on either side of the road on land belonging to various estates, you will find instead of rye an abundance of the lebeda-weed; on the peasants' land not even that! So that in the year to come the situation of the peasants in this locality will be incomparably worse than it is now, and I was told that the rye had failed in many other places.

I speak of the situation of the peasants only, and not of the farmers in general, because only for the peasants, who are supported directly and immediately by their grain, and especially by their rye-fields, does the crop of rye have a decisive answer to the question of life and death.

When in a peasant's home the supply of grain is not sufficient for his household or a large part of it, and bread is high, as it is this year (about a ruble), then his situation becomes desperate, like the situation, let us say, of a functionary deprived of his place and his salary, and still continuing to support his family in the city. For the chinovnik to exist without his salary, he must either spend his earnings or sell his possessions, and each day of life brings him nearer to absolute ruin. Exactly so it is with the peasant who is obliged to buy costly bread, apart from the usual quantity secured by his definite earnings, with this difference, that, as he sinks lower and lower, the chinovnik, as long as he lives, is not deprived of the possibility of securing a place and getting his position back again; while the peasant, deprived of his horse, his field, his seed, is definitely deprived of any possibility of recovering himself.

In this ruin-threatening situation are most of the peasants in this locality. Next year this situation will be not only threatening, but, for the majority, will bring actual ruin. And therefore assistance, both from the government and from private persons, will be even more essential than it is this year.

And meantime, now, at the present moment, in our government of Tula, as well as in the governments of Orlof, Riazan, and Voronezh, and others, the most en-

ergetic measures are taken to prevent application of private aid, in any of its forms, — measures, it would seem, universal and constant.

Thus, in this Yefremovsky District where I went, persons from outside were absolutely prohibited from coming in to render assistance to the needy. A bake-shop, opened there by a person who came with contributions from the Free-Economical Society, was closed under my own eyes, and the person himself was expelled. And others who had come before me were also expelled. It was taken for granted that there was no need in this district, and that help was not required. So that, even if from private reasons I could not have fulfilled my intentions and driven through the Yefremovsky District, my visit there would have been useless, or would have brought about unnecessary complications.

In the Chernsky District during my absence, according to the reports of my son, who went there, the following took place. The police authorities, coming to a hamlet where a free eating-room had been opened, prevented the peasants from going to it for their dinners and suppers; to prove their fidelity to duty, they broke up the tables where the food was served, and calmly rode away, not substituting for the crust of bread which they took away from these starving men anything except a recommendation to resigned obedience!

It is difficult to realize what comes into the minds and hearts of people compelled to submit to this arbitrary prohibition, or of those that know about it. It is still more difficult, for me at least, to realize what comes into the minds and hearts of others — of those that consider it necessary to enact and carry out such measures; that is to say, without knowing what they are doing, to take the bread of charity out of the mouths of starving old men and children.

I know the considerations which are urged in defense of such measures. In the first place, it is necessary to show that the condition of the population committed to our charge is not so bad as the men of the party opposed to us try to make it appear — as if the matter did

not concern the aid of the starving, but the outcome of a contest. In the second place, every establishment — and free eating-rooms and bakeshops, in the opinion of the stanovoï — must be subjected to the control of the police authorities.[1] In the third place, the direct and immediate relations of those that are assisting the population might arouse in them undesirable thoughts and feelings.

But all these considerations, even if they had any reason — and they are all false — are so petty and insignificant that they can have no weight in comparison with what is done by the free eating-rooms and bakeshops, in giving bread to the needy.

Why, the whole matter consists in the following: there are people, we will not say dying, but suffering from want; there are others living in abundance and out of the goodness of their hearts willing to share their superfluity with these sufferers; there are still others who are willing to be the mediators between these two classes and to give their labor to this end.

Can such activities be subjected to the interdiction of the authorities?[2]

I can understand why the soldier in the Borovitsky Gates, when I was going to give alms to a beggar, forbade me to do so, and paid no attention to my reference to the Gospels, but asked me if I had read the military code; he was a watchman. But the government authorities cannot be ignorant of the Gospels and forbid the fulfilment of the most fundamental morality — that is to say, that men should help one another.

The government, on the contrary, exists only so as to remove everything that prevents this help. So that the government has no grounds for its opposition to this activity. If the mendaciously guided organs of the government should demand subjection to such a pro-

[1] "And yet in 1891 and 1892 such subjection was not required." Omitted in Moscow edition.

[2] "Can such activities be harmful to any one and can it be a part of the duties of the government to oppose them?" Geneva edition.

hibition, a private citizen would be under obligations not to submit to such a demand.[1]

When the policeman who came to us said that it was my duty to apply to the governor with a petition to be allowed to establish the eating-rooms, I replied to him that I could not do that, since I did not know any statute whereby the establishment of free tables was interdicted; even if there had been any such I could not be subjected to it, because if I were subjected to such a law, the next day I might be reduced to the necessity of submitting to a prohibition against distributing flour, of giving any kind of alms without the permission of the government.

They may close the eating-rooms and bakeshops, they may send from one district to another those that come to help the population, but it is impossible to prevent those thus expelled from one district, from living in another among their friends or in some peasant izba, and serving the people in some other way, thus sharing with them their means and their labor. It is impossible to herd away one class of the people from another. Every attempt at such divisions induces the very consequences which this separation is intended to prevent. It is impossible to prevent communication among men; one can only interfere with the regular course of this communication, and give it a dangerous tendency where otherwise it would be beneficent.

To help the present, as indeed every, human need, only a spiritual elevation of the people can avail — I mean by the people, not only the peasantry, but the whole people, both the working-classes and the rich — and this elevation of the people will be only in one direction — in a greater and greater fraternal unity of men; and therefore, to help the people it needs to encourage this unity and not to stand in its way. Only by such a brotherly unity — greater than ever before —

[1] These two paragraphs are not in the Moscow edition: instead the following inoffensive sentences are substituted: "Moreover the government cannot do this. It is as impossible to prevent a man from eating when he is hungry as to prevent another man from giving this hungry one the superfluity of his bread, his property, or his labor."

will the actual poverty of this year and the prospective poverty of the year to come be relieved, and also the general prosperity of the ever declining peasantry be restored, and the possibility of a repetition of the misfortune of 1891 and 1892, and of the present year, be averted.

June 16, 1898.

PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN RUSSIA

"In the world, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." — JOHN xvi. 33.

THE Dukhobors[1] settled in the Caucasus have been subjected to cruel persecutions by the Russian authorities; and these persecutions, described in the report of one who made inquiries on the spot,[2] are now, at this moment, being carried on. These Dukhobors were beaten, whipped, and ridden down; quartered upon them in "executions" were Cossacks who, it is proved, allowed themselves every license with these people; and everything they did was with the consent of their officers. Those men who had refused military service were tortured, in body and in mind; and it is entirely true that a prosperous population, who by tens of years of hard toil had created their own prosperity, were expelled from their homes and settled, without land and without means of subsistence, in the Georgian villages.

The cause of these persecutions is, that for certain reasons three-fourths of the Dukhobors (that is, about 15,000 people, their whole population being about 20,000) have this year returned with renewed force and earnestness to their former Christian profession, and have

[1] The Russian word Dukhobortsui — from *Dukh*, "spirit," and *barets*, "a wrestler" — is the nickname popularly applied to the dissidents who refuse to use carnal weapons of defence. The simpler form "Dukhobors" is now generally employed. — ED.

[2] A detailed report of those persecutions, drawn up from personal observation by a friend and agent of Count Tolstoï, was published in the London *Times* of October 23, 1895.

resolved to comply in practice with Christ's law of non-resistance to evil by violence. This decision has caused them, on one hand, to destroy all their weapons, which are considered so needful in the Caucasus, thus renouncing the possibility of fighting, and putting themselves at the mercy of every marauder; and, on the other hand, to refuse, under all circumstances, participation in acts of force which may be demanded from them by the government; which means that they must refuse service in the army or wherever else violence is used. The government could not permit so many thousands of people such a desertion of the duties established by law, and a struggle broke out. The government demands compliance with its requirements; the Dukhobors will not obey.

The government cannot afford to yield. Not only because this refusal of the Dukhobors to comply with the requirements of government has, from the official standpoint, no legal justification, and is contradictory to the existing time-consecrated order; but such refusals must be discountenanced at once, for the sole reason that, if allowed to ten, to-morrow there will be a thousand, ten thousand, others who wish to escape the burden of the taxes and the conscription. And if this is allowed, there will spring up marauding and chaos instead of order and security; no one's property or life will be safe. Thus reason the authorities; they cannot reason otherwise; and they are not in the least at fault in so reasoning. Even without any such selfish consideration as that these desertions might deprive him of his means of subsistence, now collected from the people by means of compulsion, every official, from the Tsar down to the *uryadnik* or village police-commissioner, must be deeply indignant with the refusal of some uncivilized, unlettered people to comply with the demands of the government, which are obligatory upon all. "How dare these mere ciphers of people," thinks the official, "deny that which is recognized by every one, that which is consecrated by the law, and is practised everywhere?" As officials, they cannot be shown to be in error for

acting as they do. They use force, brute force. And they cannot avoid so doing.

In point of fact, how can you, by reasonable and humane means, compel men who profess the Christian religion to join another body of men who are learning how to kill, and practising for that purpose? The deception of deceived people can be maintained by various kinds of stupefactions — by administration of oaths, by theological, philosophical, and judicial sophistries. But as soon as the deception is by some means broken, and people like the Dukhobors, calling things by their right names, say, "We are Christians, and therefore we cannot kill," then the lie is exposed; and to persuade such men by arguments of reason is impossible. The only means of inducing them to obey are blows, "executions," deprivation of shelter, cold and hunger in their families. Just these means are used. As long as the officials are not conscious of their wrong position they can do nothing else; and therefore are not at fault. But still less are those Christians at fault who refuse to participate in murderous exercises, and to join a body of men who are trained to kill any whom the government orders to be killed. They, also, cannot act otherwise. The nominal Christian, baptized and brought up in Greek orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism, might continue to follow violence and murder, as long as he does not discover the deception put upon him.

But as soon as he discovers that every man is responsible to God for his acts, and that this responsibility cannot be shifted to some one else or excused by the oath, and that he must not kill, or prepare himself to kill, then participation with the army at once becomes to him as impossible morally as it is physically impossible for him to lift a ton weight.

This fact of the Christian religion makes its relation to government a terrible tragedy. The tragedy arises from this, that the governments have to rule over nations which are Christian, though not yet wholly enlightened, but still every day and hour becoming more and more illumined with the teaching of Christ. All

"civilized" governments, from the days of Constantine, have known and felt this, and from the instinct of self-preservation have done everything they could to obscure the true idea of Christianity, and to destroy its spirit. They have known that when men become alive to this spirit, force will be abolished, together with government itself. Therefore the governments have continued to pursue their vocation by creating State institutions, by piling up laws and institutions one on the other, hoping under these to bury the undying spirit of Christ infused into the hearts of men. The governments have continued their labor, but at the same time the Christian teaching has done its work, more and more penetrating the minds and hearts of men. And now comes the time — which, Christianity being the work of God, opposed to government, which is man's work, was bound to come — when the effect of Christianity overcomes the effect of governments.

Just as in the burning of a pile there comes a moment when the fire which long worked obscurely within, only now and then by flashes and smoke proving its presence, suddenly wins its way on every side with a burning no longer to be subdued, so in the conflict of the Christian spirit with the pagan laws and institutions, there comes the time when this Christian spirit bursts forth everywhere, no longer to be kept under, and every moment threatening to destroy the institutions under which it was buried.

Indeed, what can, what must, government do with these 15,000 of the Dukhobors who refused military service? What is to be done with them? They cannot be let alone. Even now, at the beginning of the movement, there have appeared Greek Orthodox people who follow the example of the Dukhobors. What then, does the future hold? What if similar action is taken by the Molokans, Stundists, Shaloputy, Khlysty, the Pilgrims, all those sectarians who hold the same views as to government and military service, and who do not act as the Dukhobors have done, merely because they have not resolution to take the initiative, and fear

to suffer? Of such people there are millions; not in Russia only, but in all Christian countries; not only in Christian, but in Moslem countries; in Persia, Turkey, and Arabia, for instance, there are the Karidshity and the Babisty. It is needful to prevent contagion from these ten of thousands who acknowledge no government, and do not wish to take part in government. But how? Certainly they cannot be killed. They are too many. It is no less difficult to put them in prison. It is only possible to ruin and torture them. And just this is done.

But what if these tortures have not the desired effect, and these people still persist in declaring the truth, and by so doing attract more adherents? The position of governments is crucial; the more so that they can take no certain stand. You cannot denounce as bad the deeds of men like Drozhin, who was tortured to death in prison; or Izyumchenko, still suffering in Siberia; or Dr. Skarvan, imprisoned in Austria; or like all those others at present in prisons, — men who are ready to suffer and to die, only to be faithful to the most simple, universally comprehensible and approved religious principles, which prohibit murder and participation in murder.

By no device of logic can you demonstrate the acts of these men to be bad or unchristian; and not only are you unable to disapprove, but you cannot help admiring them. Because you must admit that men who so act, act in the name of the noblest qualities of man's soul, — qualities which, if you do not recognize their nobility, you reduce man's life to the level of animal existence. Therefore, however government acts toward these men, it must inevitably forward, not their, but its own, destruction. If government refrains from persecuting these people who, like the Dukhobors, Stundists, Nazarenes, and isolated individuals, refuse to take part in the acts of government, then the advantages of the peaceful Christian lives of these men will attract to them not only sincerely convinced Christians, but also those who will become Christians externally; and the

number of people who do not comply with the requirements of government will grow more and more.

On the other hand, if the government continues its cruelty as at present, then this very cruelty, to men whose only fault is that they lead a more moral and righteous life than others do, and seek to apply practically the law of righteousness which is professed by all, this very cruelty will more and more repel men's sympathy from government, and finally there will be no men ready to support it by force. The half-savage Cossacks who beat the Dukhobors by order of the officers, "very soon began to be tired of it," as they said when they were quartered in the villages of the Dukhobors. That means, conscience began to agitate them; and the authorities, fearing the influence of the Dukhobors upon them, hastened to withdraw them.

Never was a persecution of innocent people which has not ended in the persecutors receiving the principles of the persecuted; as it was with the warrior Simeon, who exterminated the Paulicians and then adopted their creed. The more indulgent the government, the quicker the numbers of true Christians will grow. The more cruel the government, the quicker the numbers of those that yield to the requirements of government diminishes. Thus, whether indulgent or cruel toward men who by their lives proclaim Christianity, government is forwarding its own destruction. "*Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*"[1] And this judgment was pronounced eighteen hundred years ago — that is, at the time when, in place of the principle of external justice, the principle of love was asserted.

However much wood one throws on the burning pile of sticks, thinking thus to put out the fire, the inextinguishable flame, the flame of truth, will only be temporarily smothered, and will burn up still more strongly, consuming everything heaped upon it. Even though it happen (as it always happens) that some of the contenders for truth become weak in the strife, and yield to the govern-

[1] John xii. 31.

ment, that, nevertheless, would not in the least change the position. If to-day the Dukhobors in the Caucasus should yield, being unable any longer to bear the sufferings which overcome their old men and women, their wives and children, still, to-morrow, there would arise other contenders, ready on all hands, more and more boldly proclaiming their principles, and less and less liable to yield. Does truth cease to be truth because the men who professed it become weak under the pressure of torture? That which is of God must conquer that which is of man.

"But what will happen if government is brought to an end?" I hear the question which is always put by those who think that if we lose that which we now have, then there will remain nothing, everything will be lost.

There is always the one answer to this question. There will be the thing which ought to be, that which is well-pleasing to God, which is according to the law He has put in our hearts and revealed to our minds. If government should be abolished by us in the way of revolution, certainly the question as to what will be after government is done away with would require an answer from the abolitionists. But the abolition which is now in process is taking place, not because some one, or some body of men, have resolved upon it, but government is being swept away because it is not according to the will of God which He has revealed to our minds and put into our hearts.

A man who refuses to kill and imprison his brother man does not purpose to destroy government; he merely wishes not to do that which is contrary to the will of God; he is merely avoiding that which not only he, but every one who is above the brute, undoubtedly considers evil. If through this, government be destroyed, it only shows that the demands of government are contrary to God's will — that is, they are evil; and thus government, being in itself an evil, comes to be destroyed. The change which is now taking place in the social life of the nations, although we cannot exactly tell what form it will take in the future, cannot be bad, because it proceeds, and will

be wrought out, not through man's arbitrary will, but as the result of a divine principle common to us all and resident in our hearts. A process of birth is going on, and our whole action must be directed not to thwart, but to help, this process. And such help is given, certainly not by resisting the divine truth revealed to us, but, on the contrary, by an open and fearless admission of it. Such admission of truth gives not only full satisfaction to the conscience of those who so profess, but also the greatest possible welfare to all; to the persecuted and to the persecutors as well. Salvation is not in retrogression, but in progression.

The crisis in the change of the form of our social life and in the replacement of forcible government by some other socializing principle, has passed already; and the solution before us is not by stoppage of the process, or by reversal of it, but by nothing else than a forward movement along that road which the law of Christ points out to the hearts of men.

Yet another effort, and the Galilean will conquer. Not in that ruthless sense understood by the pagan emperor, but in that true sense in which He Himself spoke of His conquest of the world. "*In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer*," said He, "*I have overcome the world.*" [1]

He has actually overcome the world; not in a mystical sense of invisible victory over sin, as these words are interpreted to mean by the theologians, but in the simple, clear, and comprehensible sense that, if we will only have courage and boldly profess Him, soon not only will those horrible persecutions of the body of true disciples of Christ who carry out His teaching practically in their lives disappear, but there will remain no more prisons or gallows, no wars, corruption, idleness, or toil-crushed poverty, under which Christian humanity now groans.

[1] John xvi. 33.

HELP![1]

THE facts related in this Appeal,[2] composed by three of my friends, have been repeatedly verified, revised, and sifted; the Appeal itself has been several times recast and corrected; everything has been rejected from it which, although true, might seem an exaggeration; so that all that is now stated in this Appeal is the real, indubitable truth, as far as the truth is accessible to men guided only by the religious desire, in this revelation of the truth, to serve God and their neighbor, both the oppressors and the oppressed. But, however striking the facts here related, their importance is determined, not by the facts themselves, but by the way in which they will be regarded by those who learn about them. And I fear that the majority of those who read this Appeal will not understand all its importance.

"Why, these fellows are a set of rioters; coarse, illiterate peasants; fanatics who have fallen under evil influence. They are a noxious, anti-governmental sect, which the Government cannot put up with, but evidently must suppress, as it suppresses every movement injurious to the general welfare. If women and children, innocent people, have to suffer thereby, well, what is to be done?"

This is what, with a shrug of the shoulders, people who have not penetrated the importance of this event will say.

On the whole, this phenomenon will, to most people, seem devoid of interest, like every phenomenon whose

[1] Published in *Christian Martyrdom* in Russia.

[2] Early in 1897, an Appeal on behalf of the Dukhobors was drawn up by three friends of Count Tolstoï's. The latter added this article to what his friends had written. His three friends were all banished for their offense.

place is strongly and clearly defined. Smugglers appear — they must be caught; anarchists, terrorists — society must get rid of them; fanatics, self-mutilators — they must be shut up, transported; infringers of public order appear — they must be suppressed. All this seems indisputable, evident, decisive, and therefore uninteresting.

And yet such an attitude toward what is related in this Appeal is a great error.

As in the life of each separate individual (I know this in my own life, and every one will find similar cases in his own), so also in the life of nations and humanity, events occur which constitute turning-points in their whole existence; and these events, like the "still small voice" (not the "great and strong wind") in which Elijah heard God, are always not loud, not striking, hardly remarkable; and in one's personal life one always afterward regrets that at the time one did not guess the importance of what was taking place.

"If I had known it was such an important moment in my life," one afterward thinks, "I should not have acted in such a way."

It is the same in the life of mankind. A Roman emperor enters Rome in noisy, pompous triumph — how important this seems; and how insignificant, it then seemed, that a Galilean was preaching a new doctrine, and was executed therefor, just as hundreds of others were executed for apparently similar crimes.

And so now, too, how important in the eyes of refined members of rival parties of the English, French, and Italian parliaments, or of the Austrian and German diets, and in the eyes of all the business men in the city and of the bankers of the whole world, and their press organs, are the questions as to who shall occupy the Bosporus, who shall seize some patch of land in Africa or Asia, who shall triumph in the question of bimetallism, and so on; and how, not only unimportant, but even so insignificant that they are not worth speaking about, seem the stories which tell that, somewhere in the Caucasus, the Russian government has

taken measures for crushing certain half-savage fanatics, who deny the obligation to submit to the authorities.

And yet, in reality, how not merely insignificant, but comic, beside the phenomena of such immense importance as are now taking place in the Caucasus, is the strange anxiety of full-grown people, educated, and illuminated by the teaching of Christ (or at least acquainted with this teaching, and capable of being illuminated by it), as to which country shall have this or that patch of land, and what words were uttered by this or that erring, stumbling mortal, who is merely a production of surrounding conditions.

Pilate and Herod, indeed, might not understand the importance of that for which the Galilean, who had disturbed their province, was brought before them for judgment; they did not even think it worth while learning wherein consisted His teaching; even had they known it, they might have been excused for thinking that it would disappear (as Gamaliel said); but we — we cannot but know the teaching itself, as well as the fact that it has not disappeared in the course of eighteen hundred years, and will not disappear until it is realized. And if we know this, then, notwithstanding the insignificance, illiterateness, and obscurity of the Dukhobors, we cannot but see the whole importance of that which is taking place among them. Christ's disciples were just such insignificant, unrefined, unknown people, and other than such the followers of Christ cannot be. Among the Dukhobors, or rather, "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood," as they now call themselves, nothing new is taking place, but merely the germinating of that seed which was sown by Christ eighteen hundred years ago, the resurrection of Christ Himself.

This resurrection must take place, cannot but take place, and it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that it is taking place, merely because it is occurring without the firing of guns, parade of troops, planting of flags, illuminated fountains, music, electric lights, bell-ringing, and the solemn speeches and the cries of people

decorated with gold lace and ribbons. Only savages judge of the importance of phenomena by the outward splendor with which they are accompanied.

Whether we wish to see this or not, there has now been manifested in the Caucasus, in the life of the "Universal Brotherhood of Christians," especially since their persecution, a demonstration of that Christian life toward which all that is good and reasonable in the world is striving. For all our State institutions, our parliaments, societies, sciences, arts, — all this only exists and operates in order to realize that life which all of us, thinking men, see before us as the highest ideal of perfection. And here we have people who have realized this ideal, probably in part, not wholly, but have realized it in a way we did not dream of doing with our complex State institutions. How, then, can we avoid acknowledging the importance of this phenomenon? For that is being realized toward which we are all striving, toward which all our complex activity is leading us.

It is generally said, that such attempts at the realization of the Christian life have been made more than once already; there have been the Quakers, the Mennonites, and others, all of whom have weakened and degenerated into ordinary people, living the general life under the State. And, therefore, it is said such attempts at the realization of the Christian life are not of importance.

To say so is like saying that the pains of labor which have not yet ended in birth, that the warm rains and the sun-rays which have not as yet brought spring, are of no importance.

What, then, is important for the realization of the Christian life? It is certainly not by diplomatic negotiations about Abyssinia and Constantinople, papal encyclicals, socialistic congresses, and so on, that mankind will approach to that for which the world endures. For, if the kingdom of God, *i.e.* the kingdom on earth of truth and good, is to be realized, it can be realized only by such attempts as were made by the first disciples

of Christ, afterwards by the Paulicans, Albigenses, Quakers, Moravian Brethren, Mennonites, all the true Christians of the world, and now by the "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood."

The fact that these pains of labor continue and increase does not prove that there will be no birth, but, on the contrary, that the birth is near at hand. People say that this will happen, but not in that way, — in some other way, by books, newspapers, universities, theaters, speeches, meetings, congresses. But even if it be admitted that all these newspapers and books and meetings and universities help to the realization of the Christian life, yet, after all, the realization must be accomplished by living men, good men, with a Christian spirit, ready for righteous common life. Therefore, the main condition for the realization is the existence and gathering together of such people as shall even now realize that toward which we are all striving. And behold, these people exist!

It may be, although I doubt it, that the movement of the "Christian Universal Brotherhood" will also be stamped out, especially if society itself does not understand all the importance of what is taking place, and does not help them with brotherly aid; but that which this movement represents, that which has been expressed in it, will certainly not die, cannot die, and sooner or later will burst forth to the light, will destroy all that is now crushing it, and will take possession of the world. It is only a question of time.

True, there are people, and, unfortunately, there are many, who hope and say, "But not in our time," and therefore strive to arrest the movement. Yet their efforts are useless, and they do not arrest the movement, but by their efforts only destroy in themselves the life which is given them. For life is life, only when it is the carrying out of God's purpose. But, by opposing Him, people deprive themselves of life, and at the same time, neither for one year, nor for one hour, can they delay the accomplishment of God's purpose.

And it is impossible not to see that, with the outward

connection now established among all the inhabitants of the earth, with the awakening of the Christian spirit which is now appearing in all corners of the earth, this accomplishment is near at hand. And that obduracy and blindness of the Russian government, in directing persecution against the "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood," a persecution like those of pagan times, and the wonderful meekness and firmness with which the new Christian martyrs have endured these persecutions, — all these facts are undoubted signs of the nearness of this accomplishment.

And therefore, having understood all the importance of the event that is taking place, both for the life of the whole of humanity and for the life of each of us, remembering that the opportunity to act, which is now presented us, will never return, let us do that which the merchant in the Gospel parable did, selling all he possessed that he might obtain the priceless pearl; let us disdain all mean, selfish considerations, and let each of us, in whatever position he be, do all that is in his power, in order, — if not directly to help those through whom the work of God is being done, if not to partake in this work, — at least not to be the opponents of the work of God which is being accomplished for our good.

December 14, 1896.

THE EMIGRATION OF THE DUKHOBORS[1]

A POPULATION of twelve thousand people — "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood," as the Dukhobors, who live in the Caucasus, call themselves — are at the present moment in the most distressing circumstances.

Without entering into argument as to who is right: whether it be the governments who consider that Christianity is compatible with prisons, executions, and above all, with wars and preparations for war; or whether it be the Dukhobors, who acknowledge as binding only the Christian law (which renounces the use of any force whatever, and condemns murder), and who therefore refuse to serve in the army, — one cannot fail to see that this controversy is very difficult to settle. No government could allow some people to shun duties which are being fulfilled by all the rest, and to undermine thereby the very basis of the State. The Dukhobors, on the other hand, cannot disregard that very law which they consider as divine, and, consequently, as supremely obligatory.

Governments have hitherto found a way out of this dilemma, either by compelling those who refuse military service (on account of their religious convictions) to fulfil other duties, more difficult, but not in conflict with their religious beliefs, as has been done, and is still being done, in Russia with the Mennonites (who are compelled to do the usual term of service at government

[1] First published in the *Daily Chronicle*, London.

works); or else the governments do not recognize the legality of a refusal for religious reasons, and punish those that fail to obey a general law of the State, by putting them into prison for the usual term of service, as is done in Austria with the Nazarenes. But the present Russian government has found yet a third way of treating the Dukhobors — a way which one might have expected would be dispensed with in our time. Besides subjecting those that refuse military service to the most painful tortures, it systematically causes suffering to their fathers, mothers, and children, probably with the object of shaking — by the tortures of these innocent families — the resoluteness of the dissentients.

Not to mention the floggings, incarcerations, and every kind of tortures to which the Dukhobors who refused to serve in the army were subjected in the penal battalions, where many died, and their banishment to the worst parts of Siberia; not to mention the two hundred reserves, who, during the course of two years, languished in prison, and are now separated from their families, and exiled, in pairs, to the wildest parts of the Caucasus, where, deprived of every opportunity of earning a living, they are literally dying of starvation, — not to mention these punishments of those guilty of having refused to serve in the army, the families of the Dukhobors are being systematically ruined and exterminated.

They are all deprived of the right to leave the place where they live, and are heavily fined and imprisoned for non-compliance with the strangest demands of the authorities; for instance, for calling themselves by a different name from the one they are ordered to adopt, for fetching flour from a neighboring mill, for going from the village to a wood to gather fuel; a mother is even punished for visiting her son. And so the last resources of inhabitants formerly well-to-do are being quickly exhausted. In this way four hundred families have been expelled from their homes and settled in various Tartar and Georgian villages, where they, being obliged to pay for their lodgings and food, and not having any land or other means of subsistence, have

found themselves in such difficult circumstances that in the course of the three years since their removal, the fourth part of them, mostly old people and children, have already died from want and disease.

It is difficult to imagine that such a systematic extermination of a whole population of twelve thousand people should enter into the plans of the Russian government. It is probable that the superior authorities are unaware of that which is in reality going on, and even if they suspect it, they would not desire to know the details, feeling that they ought not to allow such a state of things to continue, and yet at the same time recognizing that what is being done is necessary.

At all events, it is certain that the Caucasian administration has been during the last three years regularly torturing, not only those that refuse to serve in the army, but also their families, and that in the same systematic way it is ruining and starving to death all the Dukhobors who were exiled.

All petitions in favor of the Dukhobors, and any assistance rendered them, have hitherto only led to the banishment from Russia of those who have interceded in their behalf, and to the expulsion from the Caucasus of those who have attempted to help these victims. The Caucasian administration has surrounded with a kind of Chinese wall the whole of an unsubmissive population, and this population is gradually dying out; another three or four years and probably not one of the Dukhobors will survive.

This would actually have happened, but for an incident, apparently unforeseen by the Caucasian government — namely, when last year the dowager-empress, having come to the Caucasus on a visit to her son, the Dukhobors succeeded in submitting to her a petition, asking for permission to be settled all together in some remote place, and if this should be impossible, to allow them to emigrate. The empress handed over this petition to the superior authorities, and the latter acknowledged the possibility of allowing the Dukhobors to emigrate.

It seems as if the problem were now solved, and that a way has been found out of a position burdensome for both sides. This, however, is only apparently the case.

The Dukhobors are now in a position which makes it impossible for them to emigrate. At present they have not sufficient means to do so, and being confined within their villages, they are unable to make any preparations. Formerly they were well-to-do, but during the last few years the greater part of their means has been taken away from them by confiscations and fines, or has been spent in maintaining their exiled brethren. As they are not allowed to leave the vicinity of their homes, and as nobody is allowed to see them, there is no possibility whatever for them to confer and decide upon the way of emigrating. The following letter describes, better than anything else could do, the position in which the Dukhobors now find themselves.

This is what a man, highly respected among them, writes to me: —

We inform you that we submitted a petition to her Imperial Majesty, the Empress Maria Feodorovna, who handed it over to the Senate. The result was the decree expressed in the enclosed official notification.

On February 10, I went to Tiflis, and there met our brother St. John;[1] but our meeting was of very short duration; they soon arrested both of us. I was put into prison, and he was immediately expelled from Russia.

I intimated to the chief of police that I had come on business to the governor. He said: "We will first imprison you, and afterward we will report you to the governor." On the 12th I was put into prison, and on the 19th I was taken to the governor, escorted by two soldiers. The chief clerk in the governor's office asked me, "Why were you arrested?" I said, "I don't know." "Was it you who were in Signakh lately?" "Yes, I was there." "And what did you come here for?" "I wish to see the governor; last summer we submitted a petition to the Empress Maria Feodorovna during her stay at Abostuman. I received an answer to the petition through the

[1] This is an ex-captain of the English army who took the Dukhobors some money collected for them in England.

head official of the Signakh district. I asked for a copy, but he refused, saying that he could not give one without the governor's permission — and this is why I have now come here."

He announced me to the governor, the governor called me in, and I explained to him the position of affairs. He said: "Instead of seeing me you made haste to meet the Englishman." I replied: "The Englishman is also our brother."

The governor talked to me kindly, and advised us to emigrate as soon as possible; he added: "You can all go, except those of you who are liable to be summoned at the next call to military service."

He also gave orders for me to be released from prison, and sent back to Signakh. We are, just now, meeting in council, and, with God's help, we will try to prepare for our emigration to England or America. And in this matter we ask for your brotherly assistance.

As to the position of our brethren, we inform you that Peter Vasilyevitch Verigin[1] has been ordered to remain for another term of five years. The brethren in the province of Kars are still, as before, being fined at every opportunity; they are still forbidden to leave their places of residence, and for non-compliance with this order they are put into prison for a term of one to two weeks. Diseases continue as before; but there are fewer deaths. Material want is most acutely experienced by the brethren of the Signakh district; those of the other districts, however, are somewhat better off.

And here is the official notification: —

The Fasting-Dukhobors,[2] who were expelled in the year 1895 from the district of Akhalkalak, and transported into other districts of the government of Tiflis, having submitted a petition to her Imperial Majesty the Empress Maria Feodorovna, asking either to be grouped and settled in one place, and to be exempt from the duties of military service, or to be allowed to emigrate, the following instructions have been received: —

1. The request for exemption from military service is refused.

[1] Verigin is one of their brethren who was at first banished to the government of Archangel, and afterward to Siberia, and who is now for the eleventh year in exile.

[2] The government thus designates those Dukhobors that have not consented to military service, and who also refrain from flesh foods.

2. The Fasting-Dukhobors — with the exception, of course, of those that have reached the age at which they can be summoned to the duties of military service, and of those who have failed to fulfil those duties — may emigrate under these conditions: — (*a*) That they provide themselves with a foreign passport, in accordance with the established order; (*b*) that they leave Russia at their own expense; and (*c*) that before leaving they sign an agreement never to return within the borders of the empire, understanding that in the case of non-compliance with this last point the offender will be condemned to exile to remote places.

As to their request to be settled in one village, it is refused.

This notification is issued by order of the governor of Tiflis to one of the petitioning Fasting-Dukhobors, Vasili Potapof, in answer to his personal application.

TIFLIS, February 21, 1898.

People are permitted to emigrate, but they have previously been ruined, so that they have nothing to emigrate with, and the circumstances in which they find themselves are such as to render it absolutely impossible for them to know where to go and how to arrange the migration, and they are even unable to make use of the assistance extended to them from outside, since all those that attempt to help them are immediately expelled, and the Dukhobors themselves are put into prison for each absence from their homes.

Thus, if no assistance can be rendered them from outside, they will in the end be completely ruined, and will all die out, notwithstanding the permission given them to emigrate.

I happen to know the details of the persecutions and sufferings of these people; I am in communication with them, and they ask me to help them. Therefore I consider it my duty to address myself to all good people, whether Russian or not Russian, asking them to help the Dukhobors out of the terrible position in which they now are. I have attempted to address myself, through the medium of a Russian newspaper, to the Russian public, but do not know as yet whether my appeal will be published or not; and I now address myself once more

to all sympathizers, asking for their assistance — first, in the form of money, of which much will be needed for the removal to a distant place of ten thousand people; and secondly, of advice and guidance in the difficulties of the coming emigration of people who do not understand any foreign language and have never left Russia before.

I trust that the leading authorities of the Russian government will not prevent such assistance from being rendered, and that they will check the excessive zeal of the Caucasian administration, which is, at the present moment, not admitting any communication whatever with the Dukhobors.....[1]

April 1, 1898.

[1] Count Tolstoï's appeal was heeded. A considerable sum of money was collected; the English and American Quakers with especial alacrity came to the aid of those who were persecuted for practising the Quaker principles of non-resistance; a large tract of land was granted by the Dominion of Canada for their settlement. Ships were chartered to bring the exiles across the ocean, and finally, in the spring of 1899, the Dukhobors were landed on the shores of America and, like the Pilgrim fathers, given freedom to worship God in their own manner and to wrest a living from the abundant though latent resources of the as yet unbroken wilderness. — Ed.

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